

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

RESULT OF TREATMENT

OF NEARLY

ONE HUNDRED CASES OF ASTHMA.

BY

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AND RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED TO

SIR CHARLES HASTINGS, M.D., D.C.L., &c., &c.

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INTRODUCTION
TO THE
THIRD EDITION.

MANY years have elapsed since the publication of the first and second editions of these observations, on the treatment of asthma, by my late father. The frequent applications I receive for copies, which I am unable to supply, the encouragement given to the first editions, and the recently expressed approval of Professor Aitken, Drs. Noble, Priestley, Greenhalgh, Spencer Thomson, W. Collyns, Esq., M.R.C.S., Chudleigh, and many others, lead me to publish a third edition. An extended experience of the disease during the last twenty years has convinced me that the treatment recommended is the most effectual in cases of dyspeptic asthma.

CHARLES W. PRIDHAM,
F.R.C.S. AND M.R.C.P. EDIN.

62, HOGARTH ROAD,
KENSINGTON, S.W.;
January, 1881.



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Dedication

OF THE FIRST EDITION.

TO SIR CHARLES HASTINGS, M.D., D.C.L., &c., &c.

MY DEAR SIR CHARLES,

I consider it no small honour to be permitted to dedicate this little work to you, to whom the members of our profession are so much indebted for persevering and untiring efforts to raise it to that eminence to which it is fast approaching.

As the founder of the British Medical Association, we must all feel it is to you we are mainly indebted for its rapid increase and success. This Society, I believe, now numbers upwards of two thousand members, whose object is to increase knowledge, and assist in the efforts to alleviate the bodily sufferings of mankind.

It is my pleasing task to place on record, as one of its members, my feelings of gratitude to you, and to express a hope that you may long live to be an ornament to the profession to which I have the honour to belong.

This, my dear Sir Charles, is the sincere wish of

Yours faithfully,

T. L. PRIDHAM.

HYEFIELD, BIDEFORD ;

June 1st, 1861.

INTRODUCTION

TO THE

FIRST EDITION.

It was not my intention, when I commenced the publication of my papers on the Treatment of Asthma, in the 'BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL,' to give further publicity to my views on the subject than they would there obtain. I received, however, during their progress, the unsolicited approval of my efforts from several distinguished members of the profession, among whom I would name Dr. Cowan, Senior Physician to the Royal Berkshire Hospital; Dr. Noble, of Manchester; Dr. Ranking, Senior Physician to the Norwich Hospital; Dr. Priestley, Lecturer at the Middlesex Hospital, London; W. Collyns, Esq., M.R.C.S., Chudleigh; Dr. Beddoe, of Clifton; and recently from Professor Aitken, Royal Netley Hospital, Author of the 'Science and Practice of Medicine,' 1863; with many others.

With such gratifying assurances before me, I now venture to extend my views, by means of the present publication, in the hope that many may derive that alleviation to human suffering, which has been fully evidenced in the written statements of those who have come within the sphere of my experience in the treatment of a disease which, from my repeated observation, is one of the most distressing and painful to which the human frame is subject.

T. L. P.

INTRODUCTION
TO THE
SECOND EDITION.

THE frequent application for copies of my publication on Asthma, and, as I am informed by my publisher, the almost unprecedented sale of the first Edition, induces me to publish a second; in doing so, I will just add two most interesting cases in boys who had been afflicted with asthma from their infancy, and are now in perfect health, strength, and spirits, not having experienced an attack for nearly a year.

BIDEFORD, NORTH DEVON ;
1864.

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

TREATMENT OF ASTHMA.

MUCH has been written of late on the symptoms and treatment of asthma—perhaps the most painful and apparently alarming disease to which human flesh is heir.

The observations which I have to make on the disease are based on the experience of nearly one hundred cases which have come under my medical care. I may not throw much new light on the subject; yet I am desirous to record the result of my experience and my treatment, as well as my observations on the peculiarities of this most distressing complaint, in the hope that some little may be added to the stock of information which has already been collected on the subject.

It is now many years since a deep rooted impression was made on my mind by that memorable man, Abernethy, “that in order to treat disease, whether of a local or constitutional character, it was absolutely necessary to keep the stomach in that state, so that the food which was taken into it should be properly digested, in order to secure good blood, and consequently healthy secretions and healthy action of the body generally; and that in proportion as the surgeon or the physician attended to these particulars, so in proportion would the means placed within the reach of the practitioner be more or less successful.”

With these impressions, which I believe to be most useful to the medical man, I started in my profession. I had not been long in practice when a severe case of what was called humid asthma presented itself for my treatment. I found that it had been of many years’ standing, and frequently seemed, from its violence, to threaten the life of the patient. The attack, however, would subside after a

copious expectoration had been thrown off from the lungs ; the man at the same time becoming almost exhausted for want of nourishment, which he was not for a time able to take, except in the smallest quantities. After the lapse of a few weeks, the man would rally, eat and drink largely, and go about his work until another paroxysm threatened, when I was again in attendance. On each occasion of an attack I used to say, " This surely will be the last," so severe and imminent did it appear.

This state of things went on for some time, till at last the thought occurred to me, How is it that asthmatic patients generally live to a good old age ? They do not die of consumption, nor do the lungs undergo any other change except the dilatation of the air-cells, which dilatation of the cells does not much interfere with their normal action when free from an attack. Thus considering the matter, it appeared to me probable that the original cause of the disease was in the over-worked powers of digestion ; and I was borne out in this supposition by the circumstance that the patient had respite from attacks as soon as a certain amount of expectoration had been thrown off, and his stomach had for a season rested. Was it not, then, probable that impurities in the blood were formed by imperfect digestion, which were thrown off by means of the lungs ? How far my ideas were correct, the following statement of treatment will, I think, go far to prove.

I speak now of what is called *dyspeptic asthma*—a disease which I believe to be perfectly hereditary ; that is to say, when the disease has once made its appearance, those who inherit it will ever be liable to attacks from imprudent diet ; for I am convinced that an asthmatic person can never with impunity eat and drink as other people do. I may here state that, out of the number of cases which I have attended, I found hereditary disposition in nine out of ten. And if it be true that asthma is an hereditary disease, I will endeavour, by the evidence of cases which I intend to publish, to show that wherever it has existed in any member of a family for one, two, or even three generations back, exciting causes, such as imprudent diet, an attack of bronchitis, an attack of influenza, derangement of the liver, or any other functional derangement, atmospheric influences, peculiar odours, influences of the mind either for joy or sorrow, may at any time or period of life bring to light this peculiar disease, which has hitherto been latent in

the system. It is fortunate that stomach-derangement from imprudent diet, &c., is, as far as my experience goes, the most frequent exciting cause—consequently more under the control of medical treatment, provided the patient has resolution enough to second the efforts of the medical attendant in carrying out a strict system of diet and regularity ; in fact, it may be said that the scales are thus held with disease and suffering on one side, and comparative health and comfort on the other.

Most of the other patients inherited gout, and in some instances both diseases were traced in the family ; and in more than one instance where this was apparent, I found that there were alternate attacks of asthma and gout, which is, I think, an additional evidence that both diseases are hereditary, and may be considered blood-diseases. What the peculiar element in the blood may be which produces either asthma or gout, it is to be hoped scientific researches may one day decide.

To return to my first case. The man in question possessing some good sense, although he gave himself to beer-drinking and gross eating, as he said, to get up his strength after an attack, having heard my views of his case, replied, “ Well, sir, your remarks appear reasonable enough ; and I will endeavour to follow your advice, and not eat and drink so much.” I wrote down a system of dietary and general management, which for a season he followed with advantage ; after this he became tired of the plan, and again fell into intemperate habits, with an increase, if possible, of all his original fearful sufferings. He at last became reduced in circumstances, and was obliged to apply for parochial aid. I thought I had now a good opportunity of trying the effects of diet with medical treatment on this patient, and I persuaded him to go into the union house. There I took good care that he should not deviate from my prescribed treatment, for I placed him under *lock and key*, ordering his food to be regularly given to him, whilst he had a trustworthy attendant when he left his room for the purpose of air or exercise.

His appearance and symptoms at this time were as follows :—His countenance bore the signs of great distress. His shoulders were elevated ; the eyes protruded ; he had no appetite ; the stomach was greatly distended after eating ; pulse 70, feeble, yet regular ; the tongue was coated, with fissures in it. There was

great emaciation, and inability to lie down in bed or to walk up an ascent. The secretions from the bowels were dark. The urine was loaded, showing an acid deposit.

After giving the patient an alterative pill and a salient aperient, I ordered him the following diet, which was to be regularly weighed out to him, and the hours of meals most strictly attended to—Breakfast at eight o'clock—half a pint of green tea or coffee with a little cream, two ounces of dry,* stale bread; dinner at one o'clock—two ounces of fresh beef or mutton without fat or skin, two ounces of stale, dry bread or well boiled rice; three hours after dinner, half a pint of weak brandy and water, or toast-water *ad libitum*; supper at seven o'clock—two ounces of meat, with two ounces of dry bread. He was not allowed to drink within one hour of his dinner or supper, or till three hours after; at other times he was not limited. Open air exercise was ordered to be taken as soon as the office of digestion had been performed, but short of fatigue. In addition to this, I ordered him three grains of the extract of conium four times a day, at the hours of seven, twelve, five, and ten; the dose to be gradually increased to five grains four times a day. Under this treatment, in a few days the whole of his distressing symptoms subsided. At the end of a month he was allowed three ounces of meat twice a day. At the end of two months he had gained flesh and strength, so that he was able to follow his occupation as carpenter, which he continued to do without intermission for some years, adhering strictly to the rules laid down for him, which he had now the good sense to adopt.

My views with regard to treatment in the case were simply these: not to give the stomach more to do than it could well accomplish; nor to dilute the gastric juices by fluids before or soon after eating, but to allow them to perform alone their proper functions, and to quiet the nerves of the stomach by means of a mild sedative, which prepared it for the due performance of the office of digestion. By this plan the stomach soon began to crave for food, and a longing for the hour for taking nourishment appeared—good evidence that the powers of digestion were recovering.

Is it not reasonable, then, to suppose that a moderate quantity of food, well digested, supplies the system with more pure and

nutritious blood than a large quantity of ill-digested food can possibly do? It appears to me not unreasonable that the poison, as it may be called, which is generated by food ill assimilated, finds its way into the circulation; and hence arises the misery of hereditary asthma, which nothing but a paroxysm, and generally a copious expectoration, will relieve.

This leads me to the consideration of the beneficial results arising from the sedative treatment of *dyspeptic* asthma. I have stated that I considered this disease to be, for the most part, under the control of medical treatment, and, according to my experience, by far the most frequent form of the disease. There are some further peculiarities which I have noticed in asthmatic persons, and which I would here name. First, the proportion of cases in men to women, according to my notes, is about 80 per cent. of the former. Secondly, women who are liable to asthma have gout prevailing in their families in a larger proportion than men; whilst in both sexes a number have both these hereditary diseases. Then, again, I have remarked that asthmatic people are, for the most part, gifted with great energy and talents far beyond ordinary people; and in one instance, in a lady, of whom I will hereafter speak, the greatest courage and resolution were evidenced; whilst those afflicted in humble life have been remarkable for intellectual attainments far beyond their station. It has not been unfrequently the case that I have seen persons, as soon as an attack of asthma is over, turn at once to abstruse subjects, to which the peculiar bent of their minds has been directed: and they generally excel in whatever subject of study they are disposed to follow.

I now proceed to the further evidence of cases which have been treated by me under the sedative and strict dietary system; and in doing so, I think I cannot give stronger proof of its efficacy than by quoting communications from patients themselves, as evidence of the relief they have obtained, and the life of comparative ease and comfort to them after adopting the system. But, before I go further, I would remark on the absolute necessity of procuring the best prepared extracts, which form of medicine I have invariably used for the purpose required. I have more than once been disappointed in my treatment, when my prescriptions have been sent to ordinary druggists, with whom sufficient care has not been taken in this matter; therefore I strongly advise

medical men to procure their extracts from, or send their prescriptions to, some known first-rate practical chemist, whose reputation greatly depends on the purity of his chemical preparations. Genuine extracts retain for a long time their distinctive odour, remain moist, and do not mildew. The sedative extracts which I have generally used are those of henbane, conium, belladonna, and stramonium, gradually increasing their doses, and frequently substituting one extract for another, as symptoms appeared to demand.

It is not my intention to enter into the more scientific department as to the supposed causes and effects of this mysterious and capricious disease, so ably treated of in the pages of a medical journal by Dr. Hyde Salter, whose observations I have read with much interest; my object is simply to record my remarks on the history of cases as reported by my patients, together with observations made by myself during my professional attendance, which may, I trust, lead to the mitigation of sufferings. My own opinion is, that it is impossible, from the present knowledge we possess, to come to the *real causes* of the disease in asthma; but still I trust practical observations may be valuable, inasmuch as they may lead to scientific researches, not only as regards the state of the blood in asthmatic patients, but also as regards the peculiar expectoration which is thrown off, through the medium of the lungs, in the different forms of the disease, which appears to me to be Nature's effort for relief; for it is my strong impression, as I have before stated, that it is in the blood that the secret lies, as the more healthy is the state of the powers of digestion, so in proportion is the freedom of the patient from disease in dyspeptic asthma. Then, again, as regards persons being affected in certain localities whilst perfectly free in others, may not the peculiar state of the atmosphere add impurities to the blood in some districts, whilst in others a more congenial atmosphere will lessen, and in some instances entirely remove, the impurity which exists in the circulating fluid in those who are predisposed to the disease by hereditary causes? I have, apparently, seen several instances of this kind, which I will hereafter name.

CASE 2.—In the year 1855 I was requested to visit a clergyman, upwards of seventy years of age, from the north of England, who had been residing in this town for some weeks, for the benefit of

his health. I had frequently remarked him in the streets ; and not knowing the exact history of his case, I considered he was in the last stage of consumption, so emaciated, so feeble, and distressed did he appear. I think I never saw any one walking at large so emaciated. I learned from him that he had been afflicted with asthma for ten years, that during that time his clerical duties had been suspended, and that, in fact, he was quite a martyr. In this time of his affliction he had sought every possible advice, both in London and in the country, but without any material benefit or relief; the general opinion given him was, that he would never recover, and that he must bear his affliction as best he could. He was not able to lie down in bed, and for years, every night he had anticipated death before the morning came, when, however, a copious, heavy expectoration would with difficulty be thrown off from the lungs, and as the day advanced he became somewhat relieved, was then dressed, and passed the remainder of the day in great discomfort. Having inquired into his mode of living, I was told pretty nearly as follows :—At six in the morning he had a cup of strong coffee ; at nine he had tea or coffee, toast, eggs, or a chop ; he lunched at one, generally on bread, cheese, and porter ; he had a substantial dinner, with porter and wine, and a fair quantity of port wine after dinner ; he had tea or coffee in the evening, as well as supper afterwards. My remark was, “ And for all this amount of nourishment, you are as thin as any human being can well be.” He replied, “ I have been invariably told that, without such support, I cannot live a month ; and I take it to make up for the large amount I expectorate in the morning.” I examined his chest, and found neither tubercular deposit nor any lesion of the lungs ; but evidently, from the very clear sound emitted on percussion, the lungs were emphysematous, particularly under the right clavicle, whilst lower down a dull sound was emitted. In the morning the pulse was 70 in a minute, but as night came on it rose to 90 or a 100. His tongue had a very morbid coat, large, with fissures in it ; his stomach was generally distended, and, though he ate so much, he had never any great desire for food ; his bowels were irregular ; the secretions dark ; the urine was loaded with a pink deposit. At the conclusion of my first visit, I surprised him by saying, “ You will considerably improve in health under the treatment which I intend to adopt,

and although your age is such, I should not be surprised at your one day being in harness again." His reply was, "That is utterly impossible; my disease has taken such hold on me for so many years." He further said, "he looked forward to nothing but death, and he often prayed to be released from his sufferings." I went on to remark that, if my treatment was to benefit him, seeing it was an extreme case of dyspeptic asthma, he must make up his mind to one thing, and unless it was fully carried out, he must not expect to derive any good result; that was, he must eat just one fourth of what he was daily in the habit of taking, and, in addition, his food must be weighed, and taken as regularly as the clock struck. His reply was, "If that be your plan, you will soon shorten my days." I begged him to try it for one week, which he at length acceded to. I commenced my treatment on the 23rd of April, by giving an alterative dose of blue pill and a saline aperient. I then ordered three grains of the extract of henbane three times a day, and the same system of dietary as prescribed in my first case, allowing him, in the form of animal food, only two ounces of it twice a day. The result was, that at the end of a week he was able to lie down in bed and sleep several hours; his morning expectoration had lessened considerably; his appetite improved; his tongue cleaned; the distension at his stomach lessened; the urine was clear; his spirits lightened; and he could exert himself with much more ease. He was now fully satisfied that the plan had so far succeeded; but his great fear was that he should be starved by reason of so small a quantity of food being allowed him. At the end of ten days I substituted the extract of conium for that of henbane, ordering him four grains four times a day. From this time he improved rapidly until he left the town to return home, on the 14th May. On the 19th June he wrote me from London, where he was staying with some friends: "I cannot be sufficiently thankful for the comparative ease and comfort which, through God's blessing and your skilful management, I have now enjoyed for the last six weeks. The weather has been most unpropitious, notwithstanding which I have not entirely avoided the cold; my nose is rather 'stuffy' from its effects, but no symptoms of asthma have yet appeared, and I trust, by my strictly adhering to your regimen, I may be spared any return." On the 30th June he wrote from his home in the

north of England—"I find the air here much keener than in Bideford, or in London, and it has come chiefly from the east. I cough a little in the morning, on first waking; but I have felt nothing like asthma. I have adhered very generally to your rules, with only the addition of more bread at my breakfast and tea, which you have allowed me. My secretions appear all right. I am, as you saw me, almost a skeleton; but I am in hopes, however, that the wholesome food which I get here will be beneficial." I may remark here that the months of May and June in 1855 were unusually cold, the east winds generally prevailing. On the 12th July my patient wrote: "I am perfectly free from asthma; my appetite is very good, and I greatly desire that my daily allowance may be increased; and the number of my pills, I think, may be reduced." I now ordered five grains of the extract of conium three times a day, and increased his daily allowance of food a little, keeping strictly to the hours of taking it. On the 7th December my patient informed me: "Notwithstanding the severity of the cold, and the dampness of the atmosphere, I am quite free from asthma. I now take my medicine only twice a day; it appears to have a wonderful effect. I am able to lie down in bed all night; and I sleep six or seven hours at a time, and feel no difficulty in breathing, and I trust this winter I shall be able to remain at home without a return of my fearful disease." On the 17th December he wrote to say he was still going on well:—"Some days since I imprudently exposed myself too much to the cold and damp, and was consequently seized with a severe shivering fit, and afterwards fever. I was confined to my bed for forty-eight hours, but no asthma made its appearance. I weighed myself last week, and, notwithstanding my late attack, I found I had gained seven pounds in weight since the previous weighing."

Since the date of the last letter, I have occasionally heard from my patient, who still applies to me for advice whenever his complaint, from any imprudence in diet or irregularity, threatens an attack; and, to make my prediction true, I hear he has occasionally resumed his parochial duties as rector of his parish.

CASE 3.—The third case of dyspeptic asthma was also in a clergyman, whose appearance was very different from that of the

last, he being stout and lethargic. He came to be under my care from the county of Sussex, in 1856. He had been afflicted for seven years, and his difficulty of breathing was constantly on him whilst awake, particularly after a full meal. On examination, I found his lungs greatly oppressed, and dull on percussion; his heart's action was very feeble and slow; his tongue coated and brown; his stomach much distended with flatus, which appeared to distress him greatly; the urine was loaded; he was unable to lie down in bed, and had heavy expectoration in the morning. He still performed his parochial duties, though with the greatest difficulty. Having cleared out the bowels by means of an aperient, I placed him on the sedative and strict dietary system, giving three grains of the extract of conium four times a day, with a pill every other night of two grains of each of the extracts of taraxacum and simple aloetic pill.

He came under my medical care on the 1st September. On the 8th of the same month, I had the following bulletin from him: "My health improves rapidly under your mode of treatment, and I was able yesterday to repeat the responses at church with ease to myself; and I took a walk without feeling the least oppressed in my breathing or fatigue to myself. I have been afflicted with asthma for more than seven years, and have consulted several eminent physicians without anything like the relief which I even now enjoy. A week only has elapsed since I consulted you, and yet, I am thankful to say, my chest is so much relieved, that I am able to walk several miles without being obliged to rest in order to fetch breath." On the 18th September, he wrote:—"By this time you will be anxious to know how I am going on. The weather has been certainly very fine and clear since I commenced your mode of treatment; but many a year has elapsed since I have had such freedom from pain. On Thursday last, I walked up a steep hill of half a mile without stopping once; and, on the following day, I bore the fatigue of a long journey into Sussex, without finding my chest at all oppressed. Last Sunday was the grand criterion; and I can assure you my voice was remarkably clear, and my chest but scarcely influenced by the enemy." On the 2nd October he wrote:—"My health, on the whole, is very satisfactory. Since I last wrote to you, the weather has been very cold and stormy; notwithstanding which, I have breathed

more freely than I have for many a year, and I now go about the active duties of my calling with confidence."

Another letter, a month afterwards, tells me he is quite well ; since which time I have had no communication with my patient, but I learn from his friends, that, thinking that he had remained so long free from complaint, he might with impunity return to his former way of eating and drinking whatever came in his way, he has consequently since experienced returns of his complaint, as might naturally be expected ; for, as I have before stated, an asthmatic patient, who inherits asthma, can never with impunity eat and drink as other people ; and, although I gradually increased the amount of support taken in this case, yet the patient was not satisfied, but allowed his inclination to overrule his better judgment.

The above case must be admitted to be strong proof how much the disease is influenced by the manner in which the office of digestion is performed, and how much the patient has it in his own power to live a life of comparative ease and comfort.

CASE 4.—In the foregoing I have recorded the history and the result of my treatment of *dyspeptic asthma* in two clergymen. I will now proceed to relate a case in one of our own profession (which, however, he had been unable to follow, on account of his sufferings for a long time) ; it will, I think, be read with interest ; and I cannot do better than give an account of the patient, as sent to me by a near relation of his, who, with the father of the sufferer, are medical men of high standing in this county. It is as follows :—

"June 5th, 1860. In consequence of your observations on asthma, I am induced to send you the history of my nephew's case. When three years old (he is now thirty-three), he had severe skin disease, in fact, inflammation of the dermis, with much desquamation, arising from some constitutional error, which, being very troublesome, was sought to be cured by different medical men, and was modified, and at last repelled. At seven years old, he had his first attack of asthma, which has continued at intervals ever since ; but he has at times the skin disease return ; when his asthma leaves him, his bowels are regular, and tongue clean ; his ejecta are clay coloured. His urine is suspended during an attack ; on the subsiding of which there is an enormous secretion

of it, dark coloured, and *loaded with lithates*. He has fearful headache on the approach of an attack ; and the heart labours so much with palpitation, and such great irregularity, that his uncle, who sees him every day, sometimes fears rupture of some blood-vessel. He is often obliged to sit up all night in his chair, being quite unable to lie down. *I fear his is now a hopeless case ;* but the poor fellow is very anxious to have your directions, which, I am sure, you will readily give, and it will be very satisfactory to his father and mother. When his attacks subside, he quickly rallies, comes down stairs, and walks about without dyspnœa. He eats no animal food ; but broths, ⁴jellies, and vegetables.”

In replying to this communication, I held out but little hope in this complicated case that my treatment would be of service, and I only gave some hints in the alteration and regularity in his diet, recommending solid food instead of so much liquid, and by no means to drink when animal food was taken into the stomach, and to avoid vegetables, pastry, fat, or any indigestible food. I at the same time requested an interview with the patient, and invited him to my house.

On August 3rd, I received the following communication from him :—“ I have improved in health and strength under the advice given by you ; but I must confess to one attack lately, which I attribute to my own folly in not confining myself to the quantity and quality of the food you recommended, I am very anxious to have a personal interview with you, and shall be in Bideford for that purpose in a few days.”

Accordingly, on the 14th, he came to my house, where I had the opportunity of watching him for some days ; and, in addition to the information I had received from his uncle, he said that up to the last two months his attacks had increased in frequency and severity, with the increase of years : that it was quite impossible to describe the extent of his sufferings during an attack. The muscles of his chest became fixed, the action of his heart for a time suspended, and even life appeared to be extinct to those who watched over him. The severity of his attacks usually lasted for four or five days, and not unfrequently he was unable to lie down for a fortnight together. Sometimes a copious frothy expectoration would come on ; and at other times there would be no cough ; but an immense flow of urine much loaded with lithates would

take place. During the period of an attack, the scaly eruption on the skin would lessen, and sometimes disappear. His body was thin; the face bloated, and had the appearance of a life of suffering; his eyelids were red and swollen; shoulders much raised, quite characteristic of an asthmatic subject; his pulse 60, and feeble; his lungs did not indicate actual disease, but were evidently emphysematous nearly in their whole extent. The stomach was distended; the secretions from the bowels were clay coloured; the tongue was rather coated; and he had but little appetite. He told me he had consulted many medical men without ever deriving any satisfactory relief. Having first attended to the secretions from the bowels, and procured a more healthy secretion of bile, I recommended the sedative plan of treatment, with strict rules as to diet, finding out as nearly as possible how much animal food the stomach could digest without discomfort or inconvenience.

After a full explanation of my views as to the cause of *dyspeptic* asthma, and the remedy, both of which appeared new to him, the reasonableness of my arguments at once gave him confidence, and he said he was fully determined to carry out my system. In addition to what I had before suggested, I ordered him a pill, to be taken four times a day, composed of three grains of the extract of conium and one eighth of a grain of the extract of belladonna. At the end of a few days, his remark was, on coming to my breakfast-table:—"My lungs are perfectly free, and I have no uneasiness in my chest; and I do not ever remember to have been in such a state of freedom and enjoyment." On that day, he walked eight or ten miles towards the sea before dinner. On his return, he remarked that, considering the small amount of animal food which he took, his bodily strength perfectly surprised him.

On September 13th, he wrote from his home:—"From the contents of your letter, it seems you have an idea that I have had an attack. Now, this is not the case; the fact is, I have altogether escaped a paroxysm, a most convincing proof, in my opinion, of the benefit I have derived from your treatment of my case. Your success is certainly a triumph, though I cannot help saying that medical men are incredulous in the matter."

On February 5th following, my patient wrote me:—"I must

crave your forgiveness for neglecting so long to send my usual bulletin ; the truth is, I have so much improved in general health, that I have very little to complain of. Since I last wrote, no decided asthmatic symptoms have manifested themselves ; and, with increased powers of digestion, I have ventured to increase the limited allowance of animal food you recommended me. This I find necessary to do, to meet the increased wear and tear of the system, from the great amount of exercise I take. I am constantly in the open air, frequently the greater part of the day away on some shooting or sporting excursion. I am surprised I have so much strength and vigour left in me. This week and the last have given me several opportunities of using my skates again ; on each occasion, I have usually remained on the ice four or five hours at a time. I know you will not approve of my departing from your rules ; and I cannot altogether acknowledge the prudence of it on my part ; but when I tell you I have gained in weight and increased in flesh considerably, perhaps there is not so much to be said against this infraction."

This communication must, I think, be conclusive, that by the judicious system of diet and sedative plan which was followed at the commencement, the stomach had greatly regained the powers of digestion in my patient, and, consequently, that new life and energy were imparted to him by means of a healthy circulating fluid which now nourished his body. I did not, however, cease to warn him against the danger of overstepping the mark of prudence, being well assured, from frequent experience, that those who are predisposed to the disease can never eat and drink with impunity what other people can.

On April 2nd, my patient wrote :—" It is very gratifying for me to be able to state, for your information, that, as far as my old enemy, the asthma, is concerned, I have been perfectly free for many months, but I am sorry to say I now suffer from congestion of the kidneys, which defies every remedy." Was it not probable that over exertion, and perhaps checked perspiration, was the cause of such an attack ?

The next communication which I had from my patient (on 30th of October) was anything but satisfactory, as regarded his state ; but, nevertheless, it is most convincing as regards my views as to the exciting cause of asthma in one predisposed to

the disease. He wrote as follows :—" I really feel ashamed to address you, and, but for this feeling, I should have written to you long ago. I have no doubt in my own mind that you have already guessed the cause of my long silence. If you have not, let me at once make a clean breast of it, and tell you I have had two relapses of the old grievance, one following hard upon the other ; brought on, not from anything amiss in your able and scientific treatment of my case, but from sheer neglect of your advice altogether. I am induced to make this humiliating confession, because I am *perfectly certain* that, had I dieted myself according to your rules, I should have remained perfectly well. I am more than ever convinced of the truth of what you say, that the disease originates in the digestive organs. Yet, notwithstanding these convictions in my mind, and with every probability of uninterrupted health were I to live as abstemiously as you recommend, I feel the impossibility of doing so at all times and seasons, for want of proper control over the appetite. You cannot be aware how difficult it is to do this, and what a power of self-denial it requires ; but you may have some notion of what I have to endure, when I tell you that daily I am almost ready to cry from hunger, since I have been under treatment, so ravenous is my appetite ; I have never felt anything like it before ; in fact, I feel like a starving man, bolting my meat fast and voraciously, and I feel I do not masticate my meat, in consequence, as I ought to do. I am often induced to chew a quid of tobacco, to allay my hunger ; it has in some measure a good effect, I think. I am now perfectly well again, and I am resolved, suffer what I may, to suffer hunger rather than asthma. Of the two, I know which is the worst evil, as I have suffered such torture, such pain and agony in these last two attacks. I must and will keep them at bay, as I have the remedy in my own power, in your treatment."

On December 9th, my patient wrote me :—" My health is in every way improved, and, considering the severity of the weather, I certainly am wonderfully well, and I do believe that by strict attention to your rules, I shall weather the winter comfortably." On December 17th, 1857, he wrote :—" No doubt you are interested in the success of a case so difficult to treat as mine, and I am sure you will participate with me in the gratification I

feel, when I say that for very many months I have been entirely free from any serious attacks of asthma. Now, when I think how much pain and suffering I have been spared, and the relief I have experienced, I cannot but feel deeply grateful to him who has been the cause of the enjoyment of improved health, such as I now enjoy ; and, indeed, so improved is my general strength, that I am sometimes quite surprised at the amount of fatigue I am capable of enduring with impunity. I beg your acceptance of a hamper of game, of my own killing.”

On February 4th he wrote :—“ I have, as yet, had no return of asthma. I have for some time past been enabled to dispense with your instructions for the regulation of my diet ; if I do, however, feel any symptoms, I at once diet myself. The affection of my skin, I am happy to say, is fast disappearing.”

Since this time, I have had no communication with my patient ; but I have instead a hamper of game occasionally sent me from the south of Devon, as an indication that he is in the enjoyment of good health.

I have now given a history of this case over a space of nineteen months, in my patient's own words. I think no one who reads what he has recorded will for a moment doubt the success of the treatment which I adopted. He completely refers his attacks to a deviation from the rules laid down for him before the stomach had sufficiently regained the powers to digest more than the prescribed quantity. It is certain that if my patient has not been sufficiently careful in his mode of living, the whole of his symptoms may return on him again ; for, as I have before stated, an asthmatic patient can never, with impunity, indulge in what are called the luxuries of life.

CASE 5.—The next case which I have to record is one of a gentleman in Staffordshire, æt. 74, who had suffered from dyspeptic asthma for forty years. The disease had increased so much of late, that he now considered his end was near ; and having heard of the service I had rendered to a fellow-sufferer, he summoned me to come to him with all speed, and on August 20th, 1855, I found him suffering from that form of asthma which is generally more difficult to relieve than any other ; that is, where the oppression on the breathing is constant, and there is no interval of rest. His tongue was brown, coated, and much

swollen ; his pulse 70 ; his lungs were completely emphysematous. The urine was scanty, and loaded with lithates ; the secretions from the bowels were dark and offensive ; the legs were swollen ; palpitations of the heart were frequent ; the complexion was sallow ; he had no relish for food ; the stomach was distended. Notwithstanding, he managed to get down a quantity of food, with porter, sherry, and port wine, which he appeared to think he was bound to drink as he had such a well stored cellar. He could not lie down in bed ; but still he managed to get down stairs daily, and with difficulty walked a little in the open air. There was in this case evidently much to be done in endeavouring to improve the secretions before any attempt could be made to treat his disease specifically. I therefore placed him at once under an alterative and saline treatment, at the same time reducing the amount of his food as nearly as I could to the usual quantity adopted for the treatment of dyspeptic asthma ; and his bowels were to be regulated by means of the following pill, taken at night.

R Pilulæ Aloes cum Myrrhâ, gr. iij ;
 Pilulæ Hydrargyri, gr. j ;
 Extracti Taraxaci, gr. ij ;
 Extracti Stramonii, gr. $\frac{1}{2}$.
 M. Fiant pil. ij horâ somni sumendæ.

Instead of wine and porter, I ordered weak brandy and water ; and toast water *ad libitum* three hours after eating animal food. He was also permitted to drink soda or seltzer-water when very thirsty.

The patient having followed this plan for ten days, as he informed me by letter, with considerable advantage, I visited him again on my way into Derbyshire, whither I had occasion to go. His appearance in every way was improved ; and his secretions more healthy. I did not now hesitate to place him on the sedative plan, and strict dietary system ; and ordered him four grains of extract of conium four times a day, at the hours of seven, twelve, five, and ten.

On September 15th, I had the following account from him : “ I am going on very well, and you may depend on my adhering strictly to your rules of diet, &c.” On September 27th, he wrote : “ I am still going on well.” On October 24th, he reported : “ The time is now drawing near when the restrictions

you laid me under are in some degree to terminate, though I do not mean to transgress the strict rules of moderation either in eating or drinking. It affords me much pleasure to be able to say, as I am sure it will be to you to hear, that I have derived great benefit from your able advice. I can walk up hill much better. I have a good appetite, and sleep tolerably well; and my friends all say I look well in face; my complexion is much clearer than it was. I beg, my dear sir, in conclusion, to congratulate you that you have been the means, under Providence, of restoring me to so great a measure of health, which, at my time of life, could never have been expected." On November 15th, he wrote: "I am still going on well. I continue my medicine, and have increased my diet a little, as you requested. I only wish I had adopted your mode of treatment many years ago." On February 11th following, my patient wrote "I feel tolerably well, but still feel the necessity of continuing your medicine, by which I am kept in so much comfort. I now take my glass or two of sherry, and do not limit myself so much to your system of dietary; but I do not drink at the time of eating animal food." I still occasionally hear from my patient when he requires my advice.

CASE 6.—My next case is that of a common carrier, æt. 45, who consulted me about a year since. He was in the habit of travelling about fifteen miles daily, his labour being performed with the greatest difficulty. Seeing his distress and laboured breathing whilst on the road, and also perceiving that he bore the marks of an asthmatic subject, I one day asked him if he wished to get relieved of his complaint. "Yes, I do sir; but I am told I shall never be better in this world. My sufferings have been long and great, and no one knows what I go through daily but myself. I am obliged to work hard all day, as you see me; and at night I can never lie down in bed to rest." I found, on inquiry, that he ate and drank as much as he could get down, and generally of the most indigestible food, partaking largely of public-house beer by the roadside, which he candidly admitted he was always the worse for. His tongue was foul; his stomach distended; his eyes red and prominent; his urine dark and loaded; the bowels were habitually costive. I treated him with a few alterative doses and saline aperients for some days, and

then commenced giving a pill of four grains of the extract of henbane four times a day. I wrote out a system of dietary for him; and, at the end of a month, he called on me to say he could now do his work as other men; and, in fact, he appeared to have a new life given to him. He was kept under treatment for three months, when he pronounced himself perfectly well. I begged him to continue to be moderate in his diet, both as to what he ate and what he drank, and more particularly not to drink at the time of eating animal food; all which he promised me strictly to observe. I met him a few days since on the road, when, with a cheerful countenance, he said, "I am quite well now, sir, as you may see." He was at the time walking up a pretty steep hill.

CASE 7.—A farmer's son, æt. 30, residing about six miles off, had been afflicted with asthma for six or seven years. He had been under the care of several medical men, who invariably told him that the only chance of getting better was to live well, which advice he followed as well as his circumstances would admit. He laboured much in his breathing, with but short intervals of rest. His tongue was coated; his stomach painfully distended; the urine showed an acid deposit; the bowels were costive; the pulse 70, and feeble. The shoulders were much elevated; the countenance anxious. He was not able to lie down at night, and had a copious morning expectoration of a frothy mucus. The right lung was in an emphysematous state. He was in the habit of eating puddings and pies, much salt pork, and plenty of broth and vegetables. I ordered him some mild alterative pills and three grains of the extract of conium four times a day, and gave him the same directions as to diet as in the former case. At the end of a month, he said he was quite relieved, and wanted a more generous diet, as he wished to go to his labour on the farm again. I increased his animal diet to six ounces daily; and he now takes his place on his father's farm, and works as other men.

CASE 8.—I now proceed to record a case of dyspeptic asthma, in a gentleman, æt. 62, who had passed upwards of thirty-five years in India, his occupation being chiefly that of an indigo-planter. He had been afflicted for ten years with the disease, the severity of which had obliged him to leave India and his profitable occupation. He had, in addition to almost constant asthma,

frequent attacks of jungle-fever, so that with the combination of these formidable diseases, he was reduced almost to the last extremity before he was put on board ship to return to his native country, to seek, if possible, restoration to health. He landed in England, after a voyage of intense suffering from the effects of asthma.

He had been home about three years when I first saw him, on November 20th, 1857. He was then somewhat improved in health; still at times he suffered severely. He could not at any time lie down in bed; and every morning he expectorated at least a pint of heavy mucous secretion. His pulse was irregular and slow. His tongue was large, covered with fissures, and coated. The lungs were emphysematous in their whole extent. The body was emaciated; the shoulders were raised; the countenance bore marks of long and continued suffering. His appetite was not genuine, though he ate largely, as he remarked, to make up for his daily waste, in consequence of the large amount of expectoration. The bowels were costive; the urine was loaded with lithates. Under these circumstances, I placed him for some days on an alterative and saline aperient plan, under which his secretions improved, his tongue became cleaner, and his general appearance more satisfactory; but the night distress and morning expectoration continued much the same.

On the tenth day, I commenced the sedative plan of treatment by giving three grains of the extract of conium four times a day, just one hour before each meal; that is, at 7 a.m., 12 a.m., 6 p.m., and 10 p.m. I, at the same time, ordered an aperient pill, composed of three grains of the watery extract of aloes and one-fourth of a grain of the extract of stramonium, to be taken at night, as often as it might be required; and the bowels to be solicited to act every morning directly after breakfast, by means of an enema of soap and water. With regard to the diet of my patient, I desired that the strictest attention should be paid as to regularity, quality, and quantity: for breakfast, at 8 a.m., he was to have a breakfast cup of green tea with a little raw cream, and two ounces of dry stale bread; for dinner, at 1 p.m., two ounces of fresh mutton or beef without fat or skin, two ounces of dry bread, and three hours after dinner, weak brandy or whisky and water, or toast-water *ad libitum*; for supper at 7, the same diet

as at dinner ; and at half-past ten p.m., a little weak brandy and water. Air and exercise were enjoined, but not within three hours after eating animal food.

On December 25th, my patient under this treatment was so far relieved that he could recline comfortably in bed ; his expectoration was lessened, and his breathing much improved ; the bowels were regular, and the urine clear and free from lithates, and he remarked to me that he had not been so free from suffering for years.

On January 1st, he writes : “ With the new year appears to have commenced a new era of my life. I sleep all night, and I have now no morning cough ; and instead of holding on by the banister to get up stairs, as I was accustomed to do before I commenced your plan of treatment, I can now spring up two stairs at a time ; and, to my astonishment, I often find myself either singing or whistling just as I used to some twenty years ago—I think I cannot give you a better description of my present enjoyment of my animal powers and my perfect freedom from oppression, than my relating this one circumstance, which I know you will be pleased to hear.”

On March 1st he writes : “ I still go on well. My health is perfectly good ; I walk eight or ten miles a day, and do not appear to be the worse for eating six ounces of animal food daily, as you directed, in addition to six ounces of bread and rice. I take and enjoy my weak brandy or whiskey and water as usual, occasionally I indulge in a couple of glasses of good old sherry three hours after my dinner. I now take your medicine only three times a day ; and, notwithstanding the small amount of food which I now take in comparison to what I have long been in the habit of taking, I have increased in weight since January 1st just seven pounds.”

On September 10th he writes :—“ I still continue in good health, and take your medicine only twice a day ; it appears to have a great influence over me in its soothing effect, and I do not like to discontinue it ; I have still added to my weight, although I do not take above one half the food I used to take.”

For more than a year I continued to receive good accounts of my patient. Whenever he had any symptoms of his former disease, he always attributed it to his own imprudence.

CASE 9.—The next case which I shall relate is that of a gentleman in London, who, on January 15th, 1859, writes to me thus :

“I have long suffered from that most distressing complaint, asthma, which during the winter months unfits me for everything ; in other respects I am in tolerable health ; my age is sixty-seven. I have continual cough, and most profuse expectoration of a thin, frothy character ; and for hours together I breathe, as it were, through a hookah ; I can get no relief, and I can assure you my sufferings are most distressing. I feel the greatest difficulty in drawing my breath in the morning before I get rid of my expectoration by violent fits of coughing ; on going up the slightest ascent I feel the greatest difficulty. Having given you these particulars, will you kindly tell me if you think you can give me any relief, so that I may be able to attend with any degree of comfort to my calling, which has been for forty years of a most exciting nature, as all men know who have to do with the Stock Exchange. I am prepared to make any sacrifice with a tolerable prospect of getting relief.”

Some few days afterwards he visited me, and, in addition to the previous history of his case which he had given, I learned that he had been afflicted for many years with asthma, as those who frequented the Stock Exchange could testify, for his distress of breathing and anxious countenance were the theme of many whilst transacting business or in conversation with them. Still his natural energy had carried him through his daily avocations up to the present time, but with increasing years he felt that life was becoming daily more insupportable. His appearance when I first saw him bore the marks of a confirmed asthmatic. He was tall with a large frame, bent forward, not so much from age as from the position which he was obliged to assume whilst on his feet, and frequently during the greater part of the night ; his shoulders were greatly raised ; his eyes protruded considerably, and the conjunctivæ were much suffused ; the tongue was thickly coated and chapped ; the breathing was oppressed and painful ; expectoration was considerable and frothy ; the chest was emphysematous nearly through its whole extent ; the bowels were irregular and costive ; the urine was loaded with lithates ; pulse 96 ; the heart was normal, but feeble in its action ; his appetite was precarious, and he had much flatulent distension of the stomach and bowels. He usually ate largely of soups, made dishes, and pastry, in addition to more solid food, and drank his beer and wine liberally. His

distress, he said, was always the most after a full meal, and his nights were wretched. It was evident that, in addition to his usual dyspeptic asthma, he was now suffering from bronchitis also, from exposure to a draught during his journey. I therefore commenced giving salines with nitrate of potass, and counter-irritants; knowing full well by experience that it is useless to place a dyspeptic asthmatic patient under specific treatment until all *inflammatory* action of the chest has subsided, which having been accomplished, I then placed him on the sedative and strict dietary system, allowing him, in addition to six ounces of bread daily, four ounces of animal food without fat or skin. He was allowed green tea, coffee, and weak brandy and water *ad libitum*, provided the liquids taken did not interfere with the digestion of the animal food. His meals were ordered to be given with the greatest regularity, at the hours of 8 a.m., 1 p.m., and 7 p.m., the bowels to be regulated by means of four grains of the compound aloetic pill, and a simple enema after breakfast if it should be required. In addition, four grains of the extract of conium were ordered to be taken four times a day, at the hours of 7 a.m., 12 noon, 5 p.m., and 10 p.m.

Here I may remark that the greatest punctuality is required as regards taking food as well as medicine. The bowels should also be acted on immediately after breakfast, either naturally or by means of an enema; in fact, success greatly depends on the regularity with which all the functions are performed. Care should be taken also to rest the body and mind for an hour after eating animal food.

All these regulations having been fully carried out by my patient, he writes on February 14th from London, just a fortnight after his return home:—"I continue to progress satisfactorily, and am quite relieved of inconvenience. When in bed, my cough seems to be now approaching to what I generally experience during the summer season."

On April 4th he wrote:—"I am well enough to be off to Paris to-morrow. I assure you I continue to experience the most satisfactory results from your treatment. By your permission I take an egg with my breakfast, and a glass or two of sherry two hours after my dinner, and I find myself all the better for it; in other respects I do not deviate from your prescribed treatment.

I now find no walk too long for me, and except a little cough in the morning I have nothing to complain of."

On March 17th my patient writes:—"I have very great cause to be thankful for my visit to Bideford. I am nearly free from my distressing cough, with which I have been so painfully afflicted for so many years, and particularly at this season. I still persevere in following most minutely all your instructions; I greatly enjoy my glass of porter which you have allowed me at eleven o'clock, in addition to my sherry and water at four."

On April 15th he wrote:—"From the severity of the weather I have taken a severe cold; however, my cough is nothing when compared with the sufferings I formerly experienced at this season of the year; I do not get any fits of asthma now. I find it absolutely necessary to keep my bowels as regular as possible; as, if they do not act regularly, I am sure to be reminded of it. I am greatly improved in condition, and am equal to almost any amount of fatigue."

Shortly after my last communication I had occasion to visit London, and found my patient in the enjoyment of comparative health and comfort. I strongly advised him to give up his anxious and exciting mode of life, and seek amusement, if it were possible, in country life, which he promised me to do. Since this time I have not heard from him. I think that, in this case, it must be admitted that success attended the treatment adopted, inasmuch as a life of constant suffering became one of comparative ease and enjoyment.

CASE 10.—The next case which I shall record is that of a celebrated engineer, residing near London, which will, I think, be read with interest. I will commence by giving his own account of his disease to me, in a letter dated July 2nd, 1856.

"Having heard that you have been successful in the treatment of asthma, I take the liberty of writing to inquire whether you think you could prescribe for the paroxysms to which I am subject, without personal attendance. I am forty-nine years of age, and have been subject to asthma for the last ten years. It attacks me with the greatest violence between the months of May and January, when I sometimes have an attack as often as once a week; the dry parts of January seem to diminish the tendency to the complaint;

and until April or May the attacks are less frequent. When an attack is about to come on, I generally feel a little rattling in my throat on going to bed, and am awoke up in the middle of the night or early in the morning, and am unable to lie down any longer. The breathing gives rise to the most painful effects ; the air-cells seem to be stopped up, and it is only by a convulsive or spasmodic effort that I succeed in drawing breath, and each time I do so it appears as though the chest were going to burst. The muscles of the neck and those over the stomach are violently acted upon ; and the paroxysm is sometimes so violent that I am unable to speak. It usually lasts about thirty-six hours, and then goes off by degrees, whilst I bring off a copious expectoration. The London physicians whom I have consulted have given me little hope of combating these dreadful paroxysms, but have suggested various things, as solution of iron, hydrocyanic acid, smoking stramonium, or henbane seeds, taking stramonium internally. All these remedies have been without success. I was once under a course of alkaline solution, principally carbonate of potash and iodide of potassium, but it had no effect. I have given up the hope as well as the idea of going through any lengthened treatment. What I am anxious to discover is, some means of alleviating the paroxysms to which I am subject ; and it is in the hope that you may be able to prescribe something that I have taken the liberty of detailing my case to you. I forgot to say that, as soon as an attack is over, I am perfectly well, and capable, to a certain extent, of bearing fatigue. I am not very particular in my diet, and I partake of what is brought to table."

In this case it is evident that the exciting cause of the disease had been quite lost sight of, and consequently the remedies employed had failed to procure relief, as the sequel will fully prove. I will here insert my answer to the above communication :—
 "July 5th, 1856. In reply to your note which I received this morning, I beg to say, if you are desirous to try my plan of treatment for asthma, and will procure from an experienced medical practitioner, well versed in diseases of the chest, a certificate that you are free from any organic disease of the heart or lungs and have no effusion within the cavity of the chest, I will forward to you some written regulations as to the course I wish you to pursue as to diet, together with some medicine to be taken on the approach

of an attack, which I feel will materially relieve your sufferings. It would be more satisfactory to myself to see you, as I could then speak more decidedly as to the probability of your recovery, which depends more on the state of the vital organs than on the disease of pure dyspeptic asthma. I do not wish you to believe that medical treatment would not materially benefit under any circumstances; but my opinion would be guided in proportion to the soundness of the heart and lungs, which are occasionally implicated in cases of long standing."

In answer to my letter I was informed that several experienced physicians had examined his lungs and heart with great care, and that all had given their opinion that no actual disease existed in either. His physician who visited him the day before he wrote, told him that the cough, to which he had been subject from the age of sixteen indicated that his lungs were not quite what they ought to be, though there could be no serious affection about them, or he would not be in existence at present.

With these particulars of the case, I did not hesitate at once to prescribe the sedative plan of treatment, with the strict dietary system, which it was evident from the following note, dated July 14th, he was rather fearful to commence; for he writes:

"Before commencing your plan, I think it right to observe that as I am of a spare habit, it has always been considered that I require strengthening and nourishing diet, rather than a lowering one. I give you these particulars, which, by the bye, I ought to have furnished you with before, in order to put you more completely in possession of my bodily state. I shall, therefore, delay commencing your regimen until I hear from you again. My pulse usually is about 66."

As this information made no alteration in my mind, I requested he would at once commence the prescribed plan of treatment; and on August 23rd he writes as follows:—"I have had no second attack since I began your plan, which is a thing not absolutely without example, but still nearly unprecedented at this season of the year. Some little oppression I have had several times, but not enough to prevent my walking to town; and no attack has lasted above two hours, which is without precedent. Although the time is too short to form a judgment, appearances are in favour of the

supposition that your regimen has done me a great deal of good, and is the best mode of combating my terrible enemy.”

About a fortnight after the date of this letter, I had occasion to go to town, and then found that my patient had progressed most satisfactorily. His appetite was greatly improved, his tongue clean; the distension of the stomach was gone; the strength was improved, and he had had no actual return of his complaint. I increased his amount of food, and allowed him a little sherry and water.

This case appeared so interesting and satisfactory, that I requested he would give me its full history, which he was good enough to undertake, and writes to me as follows. The letter is dated from Broad Sanctuary, Westminster, Sept. 6th, 1856.

“At your request I write to you all the particulars of my case, which you have so successfully treated; and I have thought it might be as well to set them forth as fully as possible; though I may possibly become tedious by repeating a great deal of what I have already written to you.

“At the age of fifteen I was much troubled with cough and wheezing in my chest, and was compelled to keep the house whenever the weather was unpropitious. By dint of care, I was perfectly cured; and from that day to this I have never been subject to any material affection of the chest that I remember. When I arrived at the age of twenty-three, in 1830, I went to Algiers, and spent seventeen years in that or in other towns of the French possessions, with the exception of two very short visits to England. During my stay in Africa my health was generally good; and, like most people of spare habit, I found the hot climate agree with me. Nevertheless, some few times I was attacked with short breathing, not exactly like the paroxysms of asthma which I have been subject to since, but still sufficient to produce much inconvenience. I found that the application of a mustard bath, or that failing, the application of leeches, was sufficient to calm the oppression; and the cases occurred so seldom, that I thought nothing of them. About a year after my return to England (1847) I began to be attacked with paroxysms of asthma. I generally had some warning over night in the shape of some huskiness in the throat, and was awakened in the middle of the night, or very early in the morning, by an oppression which ren-

dered it impossible for me to lie down. In a short time, the paroxysms gained strength, and I breathed as it were by jerks, each aspiration being accompanied by spasmodic effort that seemed as though it would burst open my chest; and the contraction of the muscles in my neck and below the ribs in front was very great, and at the same time most painful. During the attack I was continually in want of passing water, and the urine was extremely pale. The attacks were not of equal violence at all times, though frequently they were so severe as to prevent me dressing or undressing without aid, and to incapacitate me from all movement; and I have frequently passed the whole of the day in my arm-chair, gasping for breath. The duration was almost always the same. On the second night, I went to bed with my breath much affected, but generally went to sleep; and the next morning the paroxysm would leave me about ten or eleven o'clock, having lasted me thirty or thirty-six hours with more or less intensity. I had generally an attack once a week to once a fortnight. The paroxysms have continued up to the time at which I consulted you, though with some little modification, inasmuch as, for the last year or two, I have generally been attacked during the night. I have not been so *invariably*, and there have been times at which the oppression has lasted as long as two days, though in these cases the severity has been diminished as the hours went on. During the first years, I invariably expectorated a great deal when the paroxysm left me; and as soon as it was over, and until a fresh attack occurred, I was instantly and entirely free from all difficulty of breathing. Latterly, there has been cough and less expectoration after an attack; and its disappearance has not been quite so sudden, but the freedom of breathing has returned by degrees. I have been treated in various ways for six months together. I took bicarbonate of potash and iodide of potassium, of which the object was, I believe, to bring the mucous membrane into a sound state.

“I have smoked stramonium, and taken it internally, without any relief; and henbane-seeds; inhaled chloroform, ether, and the fumes of blotting-paper which had been impregnated with nitrate of potash; but nothing has ever been of the slightest service. I began following the system you recommended me on July 27th,

and from that day to this I have not had a single violent paroxysm. My breath has certainly been affected more than once, but not sufficiently to prevent my walking with some little difficulty a distance of three or four miles; and the oppression, such as it was, has left me in the course of two or three hours, which is a thing perfectly unprecedented. The lapse of time yet has not been sufficient to enable me to pronounce with certainty; but as no such interval, at this season of the year, has, to my recollection, occurred within the last eight years without a paroxysm, I cannot help feeling the strongest hopes that your treatment, if it has not eradicated the disease, has at all events most materially mitigated it. Should these particulars be wanting in any point, I will gladly supply you with any further details. I am now only taking your medicine at night."

I have given this latter at length, as evidence of a faithful record of one on whom disease and suffering has caused an indelible impression on his memory, which lapse of years could not efface. I continued to hear from my patient occasionally for some months, giving equally satisfactory accounts of himself, since which I have received no report, which is, I hope, a proof that he wants neither advice nor assistance from me.

CASE 11.—The following is a brief account of a case of dyspeptic asthma in a boy, the son of a clergyman who was himself a martyr to bronchitic asthma, of which he died at middle age. In the month of August, 1856, the lad came under my medical care, he being frequently liable to severe attacks of asthma, almost always traceable to his eating indigestible food, such as pastry, new bread, sweets and trash of various kinds. When I first saw him, he was suffering severely. Having ascertained what was the exciting cause, after giving an emetic and clearing out the alimentary canal, I placed him at once on the sedative and strict dietary plan, giving him two grains of the extract of henbane three times a day. He took his medicine for about three weeks, during which time he had no symptoms of a return; and I understand now that, from a more regular system of living, with regular hours, he keeps tolerably free from an attack. If he indulges, he is fully aware of the penalty he has to pay.

CASE 12.—The case I have now to record, is that of a gentleman in Gloucestershire, who, during the winter months, whilst

he has almost the daily enjoyment of hunting with the Duke of Beaufort's hounds, is tolerably free from an attack ; but, should he then indulge in a full meal with more than his ordinary supply of wine, he is sure to feel distress in his breathing in consequence. He is an active energetic man ; and, I am told that, when with the hounds, he is one of the first and foremost. Hunting appears to have been his great delight ; and, being a man of large fortune, he spares no expense in being well mounted. He has other occupations, however, which require the exercise of great mental powers. In fact, he may be considered a fair specimen of those energetic persons so often the subjects of this distressing complaint.

He first visited me on the 8th July last year, at a time when his complaint was most distressing. His age was 50 ; his weight, eight stone four pounds. He had been subject to asthma twenty-five years ; it came on when he was borne down by anxiety of mind and over-exertion. His chest was well formed, though rather dull on percussion on the left side. The pulse was 80 ; the heart's action normal ; the tongue chapped and coated ; the stomach was distended after eating a full meal, which is a sure indication of an attack. He reclined in bed when free from asthma. He expectorated largely, which procured relief. At the close of an attack, he had a large flow of urine, which deposited a thick pink sediment. The bowels were irregular in their action.

I at once placed him under the strict dietary and sedative system, which has been so successful in former cases, directing the bowels to be strictly attended to by means of mild aperients or an enema.

On July 20th, my patient paid me another visit, and reported that he slept well all night ; and since the commencement of my treatment, had not had the slightest return of asthma. He said, he felt assured that it was the only plan he had ever tried which afforded him decided relief.

The next account of my patient which I received was, that he was hunting the native forest deer on Exmoor, facing the most inclement weather with impunity, and without any return of his complaint. After a time, he became regardless of the rules prescribed as to diet and regularity ; and he fully admitted that he was paying the penalty of his imprudence—asthma, in a mitigated

form, having returned upon him. In a letter I received from him a few days since, he says he was then adhering to rule ; and was in the enjoyment of comparative health, June 1st, 1864, he writes—" All well and hearty, thank God."

CASE 13.—This is a case of a superintendent of a rope manufactory in an adjoining seaport. The patient was about 34 years of age ; spare habit of body, and in appearance had been a great sufferer, which suffering from distress of breathing he had endured for nine months. It was in August, 1858, he informed me that his occupation added greatly to his distressing condition, from the constant exposure to dust of hemp whilst in the rope yard, and he greatly feared that no remedies would avail unless he could give up his present occupation. He had constant distress at night, with inability to lie down in bed, and it was but seldom that he could get an hour's sound sleep at any time ; and the moment he got within the influence of the dust and flock from the hemp his sufferings were greatly increased, so much so, that it was with great difficulty he could walk at all. His morning expectoration of a frothy mucus was considerable, which brought a certain amount of relief to him ; his tongue was coated ; his pulse feeble ; his lungs slightly emphysematous on the right side ; palpitations of the heart frequent ; bowels irregular, and the secretions from them dark ; urine scanty, and generally loaded with lithates ; his appetite capricious, and when he did eat he was generally tempted by some unwholesome food, such as fat meat, bacon, or pork, new bread, pastry, &c., which he admitted gave him distress whilst he was digesting it, with considerable distension in the region of the stomach. He occasionally drank beer in the hope of giving him strength for his daily avocations. Having attended to the general secretions for some few days, giving every alternate night—*Pil. Hyd. gr. iv, Pulv. Ipecac. gr. j* ; and on the following morning, *Mist. Sennæ comp. j oz. ; Magnes. b.-carbon., gr. x, Sod. b.-carbon. gr. viij* ; and during the day small doses of the compound rhubarb powder. At the end of ten days, during which time he went on with his usual occupation, his secretions and general appearance greatly improved. I then commenced the strict dietary system, which I have before named, and, in addition, gave him *Ext. Conii gr. iij*, four times a day ; this plan I pursued for one month, and then gradually increased the dose of conium to

five grains, four times a day. At the end of three months he was perfectly free from asthma, and had not the slightest distress or difficulty of breathing, however much he was exposed to what he considered was the sole cause of his disease. I heard nothing further of this patient until about a month since, when a sufferer from the same parish came to me for advice, which, he said, he was induced to do, in consequence of his having seen and conversed with the patient whose case I have just reported, who told him that having followed my rules pretty strictly, he had not for nearly three years experienced the slightest return of his complaint. The case I have above related, goes far, I think, to prove that by restoring the powers of digestion, whereby a pure condition of the circulating fluid is the result, the exciting cause of his disease on which my patient considered all his misery depended, had no power to light it up, simply because the seeds of the disease had been exterminated.

CASE 14.—This is the history of the case I alluded to whilst describing that of the last ; and as it is of very recent date, I am induced to add it to those I have already given of dyspeptic asthma. The patient, who resides in an adjoining parish, is a butcher by trade, about 46 years of age, and has been afflicted with asthma for the last three years. He came to consult me on the 21st of March last, when he told me that he inherited the disease from his mother. His attacks of difficulty of breathing generally came on at night, when he was obliged to sit up in his bed, and occasionally, not able to go to bed at all. The first exciting cause appeared to be a cold taken after being greatly exposed. His lungs were emphysematous on the right side ; heart normal ; pulse 70. He suffered from occasional palpitations. After an attack at night, he expectorated largely a frothy mucus, and when the attack had been more severe than usual, a viscid gluey mucus was first thrown off from the lungs. I found his right lung emphysematous ; his countenance distressed and anxious ; body thin and badly nourished ; with great languor and debility, so that he felt unfit for business. He complained of great distension and distress in the region of the stomach, particularly after eating anything he could not easily digest. His tongue was coated, with fissures on it ; urine, after an attack, highly loaded with lithates ; at other times pale and in large quantities.

He always had an attack after taking any food which he did not readily digest. His bowels were tolerably regular, but their secretions dark and offensive. I at once placed this patient on the strict dietary system, and gave him *Ext. Conii*, gr. iv, four times a day. I again saw him at the end of a fortnight, when he said: "I have followed your rules strictly, and taken your medicine as directed; and although my allowance of food is so small, I have not felt so strong for years. I am quite free from asthma, and to prove to you how well I am, I was the whole of yesterday in the fields tilling potatoes." He still continues well. While this account is being written he has returned to a more generous diet, but he finds he is not able to leave off his medicine as yet. I understand this patient prefers to suffer from partaking of improper food to living in comparative ease by following any prescribed rule of diet.—June, 1844.

I intend to close my description and treatment of dyspeptic asthma in males with the following interesting case, which I find in my note-book.

CASE 15.—A clergyman called on me on the 8th July, 1859, and said he had been induced to seek my advice in consequence of the successful manner in which I had treated a relation of his in England, with whom he had corresponded whilst he was following his clerical duties, with difficulty, in the Island of Ceylon. The following is the history which he gave me of his case:—His age was 42; he had resided on the Island of Ceylon, with the exception of short periods, for about thirty-six years, and during that time had, but with few intervals of enjoyment of health, been the subject of asthma. He remarked, however, that the neighbourhood of Trincomalee appeared to agree with him better than any other, the atmosphere being particularly dry, and the soil well drained by means of the substratum. His appetite was good, and he appeared to digest his food well. He had inherited asthma from his grandfather; and he told me that he was gifted with great energy, which alone carried him through his duties, at times most arduous—he having the spiritual charge of a large district. As far as he could ascertain, the first exciting cause of the disease, when young, was great exposure to cold; and even now, facing an east wind without a respirator, would at any time bring on a severe paroxysm. But he remarked that the most fearful attacks were brought on from eating

food which the stomach appeared not able to digest, such as pastry, pork, veal, or salt meat of any kind; immediately after which his stomach would get distended, and great difficulty of breathing would commence, and last him all night, so that he could not lie down in bed. In the morning a frothy mucus expectoration coming on, temporary relief would be afforded him. His chest, throughout its whole extent, was emphysematous, in consequence, no doubt, of the length of time to which he had been subject to the disease. His heart was normal, but weak in its action; pulse 70; occasional palpitations; his tongue large, flabby, coated, and chapped; he had much distension over the region of the stomach, with a great sense of uneasiness on pressure; tenderness over the region of the liver, which organ was enlarged; urine generally scanty, and high coloured, with a pink deposit in the morning; bowels irregular and their secretions dark. He said there were times when he breathed freely, and when *fasting*, he could preach for an hour without difficulty, but it produced great exhaustion in his system. He never thoroughly enjoyed his food, not having at any time a genuine appetite; nor could he ever recline in bed with comfort, and, consequently, was obliged to be placed high at night. His impression was, that much of his ailment might be attributed to a deformity in his spine, which, he told me, had a disposition to a lateral curvature from his childhood. He also told me he was constantly in the habit of sponging with salt water every morning, which appeared to give him a certain amount of vigour and strength for his daily labour. Having well considered all the circumstances of this case, I ordered the following in the way of medical treatment:—Pil. Hyd., gr. $\frac{1}{2}$; Extracti Taraxaci, gr. ij; Extracti Rhei, gr. j; Ft. pil., horâ somni sumend.; in addition to which I prescribed Extractum Conii, gr. ij; Extractum Hyoscyami, gr. ij; Pul. Ipecac., gr. $\frac{1}{2}$; Ft. pil., ter in die sumend. I then placed him on the strict dietary system, which I had found beneficial in other cases; and on the 20th July he reports to me, “I am greatly relieved, not having experienced any attack of asthma since I have been fairly under your mode of treatment.” Soon after, he left the neighbourhood in high spirits, hoping to return to Ceylon at the end of his term of leave, and be enabled to perform his duties in comparative good health and renewed strength.

I have occasionally heard from my patient since, who still progresses satisfactorily, adhering pretty strictly to the treatment which I have from time to time recommended him to adopt ; and it is somewhat remarkable, a few days ago a gentleman spoke to me of my patient as one of the most eloquent, fluent, and impressive speakers at the May meetings at Exeter Hall. He is about shortly to return to his calling on the Island of Ceylon.

I have now given the history and treatment of fifteen cases of dyspeptic asthma, which I have chosen indiscriminately from a great number in my note-book. All these cases occurred amongst males, who by far form the greater proportion of cases when compared with females. This may be accounted for in dyspeptic asthma, in a great measure, I think, from the greater temptations and less inclination to resist in males, the imprudences of indigestible food and the luxuries of life, both as regards eating as well as drinking.

I shall now proceed to record a few cases of dyspeptic asthma in females, which, I think, will be read with interest.

CASE 16.—This is a case of a lady who resides in the north-east of England, who wrote to me on December 19th, 1856, as follows :—“ Having heard from a gentleman in this neighbourhood that you have treated him for asthma successfully, I am induced to write and ask your advice under similar circumstances for myself. It would probably be more desirable that I should have a personal interview with you, but this would not be possible for me at the present season to accomplish ; therefore I will explain by letter, as well as I am able, what it may be chiefly necessary for you to know as regards my case. I am now 41 years of age, and have been a very great sufferer from asthma for twenty years. During this time I have tried frequent and considerable change of climate ; and I need scarcely say, many different remedies, without, however, much relief, or permanent good, in any instance. The attacks recur frequently, at intervals of not above ten days, or a fortnight, though rather less frequent in the early part of the year. They commence with great difficulty of breathing, which lasts for several days, and is still more distressing at night, when the only posture possible is leaning forward on some bench in bed, generally for several nights together. The only things relied on for any relief are smoking stra-

monium, inhaled by holding my head over a small chafing-dish ; I have also inhaled chloroform with some relief. These remedies appear to soothe and mitigate the severity of the paroxysms, though I have not thought they ever shorten the attack ; after some days, the severity of the attack subsides, and then cough, with much expectoration, comes on, and I am relieved, but feel much weakened and reduced. I have reason to believe that the cough and expectoration is not so much the cause as the effort of nature to *get rid of the disease* ; but of this, you will be a better judge than myself. I ought to add, that I have been assured by several medical men that there is in my case no organic disease. And I fully believe this, from the circumstance of my enjoying complete freedom from any pain or uneasiness in the brief intervals between the attacks, the only discomfort remaining arising from the debility they occasion. I am never able to take much exercise ; and in the winter months I am quite a prisoner. I generally take for my food what is provided for the family, when I am able to eat."

This communication is highly interesting, inasmuch as, without any opinion of mine, the strong belief and conviction of the patient was that the disease, of which she was the sufferer, went through certain stages, and was at length thrown off from the circulation by the medium of the lungs—an opinion which I have given in a former notice, and of which the more I see of dyspeptic asthma, the more I am convinced.

After a few letters had passed between myself and my correspondent, it was ultimately resolved that no *specific* treatment should be attempted, until the season would admit of her coming to Bideford, in order to give my plan the best chance of succeeding. Accordingly, on May 1st, 1857, she, in company with some of her family, accomplished the journey ; and her history, as regards her disease, is so interesting, and it bears so completely on the opinions I have advanced, that I hope I shall not be considered digressing from my subject, if I give a detailed statement of some of the incidents connected with her history.

In addition to what has been before stated, she told me she had consulted many eminent men in London and elsewhere, who had treated her case, but without success ; and that the poor consolation was given her, that she must make up her mind to a life of

suffering, as no known remedy would reach her disease. Her frame was much emaciated; her body bent forward; the eyes were large and protruding; the pulse 70; the lungs were emphysematous; the tongue was slightly coated, with fissures in it; the stomach was distended, particularly after eating. The urine was loaded with lithates after an attack: at other times pale, and in large quantities. The bowels were irregular, but their secretions were not very unhealthy. Notwithstanding the sufferings she had endured for twenty years, there was evidence of a highly educated and well-stored mind; and from the interesting history which I am about to relate, it is evident she is gifted with energy, resolution, and courage, in no ordinary degree.

As I before stated, she had tried all available means both as to climate and treatment in this country, without relief; she therefore made up her mind to cross the seas, and visit Australia: solely with the hope of restoration to health. Having relations in Sydney, she undertook the voyage to reside amongst them for a season. She suffered much on the way to this distant land; nor did she derive the benefit which she expected, as, with the exception of a short stay on the Blue Mountains, during which time her sufferings were mitigated, her distressing symptoms never left her, and she made up her mind to return to her home and country, with the melancholy prospect of enduring a life of suffering, for she felt now that her case was hopeless. Fresh troubles were at hand; as, during the voyage home, the vessel sprung a leak, which defied every effort of the crew, so that each day told them they were so much the nearer a watery grave if they could not make some land before the ship went down. In this forlorn state of things she counselled the captain and crew to take to their boats. The captain was sick and ill from fatigue and anxiety, and could do little or nothing, so that it appeared the fate of the crew was sealed; but to the astonishment of all, this courageous and gifted woman assured them that by her knowledge of navigation and the use of nautical instruments, she would steer the open boat to the Island of Madagascar, which was at that time about two hundred miles away. With this hope they all embarked in the three ship's boats. The captain was lowered into the first boat, his wife and daughter followed, and then the lady with her servant; they took with them three

or four picked men of the crew, *the lady* taking charge of the compass. Four days and nights they were exposed to tempestuous weather; at last land was declared to be in sight; and so true was the course taken that it proved to be the island before named. But why this digression? it may be asked. It is simply to record that during four perilous days not the slightest evidence of an attack of asthma made its appearance. This may be attributed to the small amount of food taken into the stomach, for the lady subsisted entirely during the time on biscuits and weak brandy and water; in fact, the stomach had but little to do, and hence the freedom from suffering which a good Providence provided for her. I mention this fact as material evidence in favour of the theory which I have ventured to advance. I will now, from the interest which must be felt for the result of this lady's case, pursue its history in connection with the peculiar circumstances under which she was placed.

Having reached the island of Madagascar, more dead than alive from fatigue, exposure, and privation, they were assailed by a large number of ferocious savages of the Malagasy tribe, with evident intent to murder them all; so that the wretched crew were of necessity obliged to put to sea again, and make for Port Dauphin, which was, according to calculation, about seventy miles distant, where they hoped to find a more civilised race. This they happily accomplished, and were treated with kindness, hospitality, and the greatest regard to the delicacy of their feelings. With this tribe the party remained just three months, hoping anxiously for some passing vessel to convey them to their native home and friends, by whom they had been mourned as lost in the perils of the sea. I need scarcely remark that during their stay on the island the sufferings of the lady in question were most intense, greatly owing, no doubt, to the quality of food on which she was obliged to subsist. I have given but a brief account of what befell the crew of the *Driade*, which has been published in a little volume written by the captain's daughter, from which interesting publication I quote the following passage, which speaks of the lady in question:—"The delicate one for whom we feared so much was wonderfully supported, and *spared sufferings* which sometimes not the greatest care nor skill could alleviate."

For fifteen years after this eventful voyage did the lady in

question, to use her own words, "suffer a life of martyrdom." This brings the time down to that in which I first saw her, on May 1st, 1857. Her appearances and symptoms at that time I have already described.

I hesitated not at once to place her on the sedative and strict dietary system, commencing with three grains of the extract of conium and one grain of the extract of hyoscyamus, four times a day, attending to the state and regularity of the bowels, and exact punctuality as to meals. I extract the following particulars from my note book :

"May 9th. All distressing symptoms are gradually subsiding : attends strictly to the prescribed rules. May 16th.—Continues free from suffering, enjoys her food, sleeps all night ; no signs whatever of her distressing disease. May 23rd.—Continues free from an attack of asthma ; looks more healthy, and is able to walk three or four miles without difficulty ; continues her plan most regularly. May 30th.—Going on remarkably well and in high spirits ; says she has not been so well for twenty years."

About this time my patient left this place to return home, staying some days with her brother in the neighbourhood of London. On leaving London, she wrote to me on the 14th July as follows :—"I think you may, perhaps, begin to feel some little wish by this time to learn how your patient is going on, and whether the beneficial effects of your prescriptions continue to be felt as much as while I was in Devonshire ; I am no less desirous to assure you how *entirely* this has hitherto been the case ; and how grateful I feel to the Giver of all good, and secondarily to yourself, every morning when I awake, for the health and comfort I am permitted to enjoy. You told me witchcraft had been extinguished in Bideford many years ago ; but I must think something of the old spirit still lingers in the vicinity of your dwelling. I only hope you will never be so uncanny as to withdraw the spells which seem to have charmed back for me a blessing I had believed not to be hoped for again. My brothers are delighted to see me so well, and can hardly believe it is the same poor panting sister they have for so long a time petted and pitied. Indeed, I am myself sometimes tempted to doubt my own identity, never remembering to have enjoyed myself as I now do for at least twenty years. Nothing surprises me more than the

impunity with which I seem now able to encounter even considerable fatigue and exposure to skiey influences that would once have certainly brought on a paroxysm of my complaint ; long drives, late hours, London sights, Crystal Palace Concerts, &c., have been a severer test than might have been wished. I am more and more encouraged to *adhere strictly* as ever to the prescribed treatment." On August 29th, having reached her home, she wrote :—" Were I to write to you as often as gratitude suggested, I believe it would be after every good night's repose procured for me by your able treatment. I am at last quietly at home again, the pleasure unmarred to the last by my old enemy—the asthma; I may say, *quite* unmarred, for though I felt once or twice a little sensitiveness when any considerable change of temperature occurred, it was not more than to induce a little extra care,—a salutary warning that I must not fancy myself quite invulnerable, and I feel that it is true what you told me on leaving Bideford, 'that I have recovery very much in my own hands.'"

On August 4th my patient writes: " You will like to hear how I am going on ; I cannot give you a more convincing proof that I am still well and comfortable, living quite a butterfly life amongst my many friends, whose society I now so thoroughly enjoy." For more than two years from the date of my last communication, I continued to receive satisfactory accounts from my patient, who occasionally writes to me for advice when she appears to require it.

CASE 17.—The next case which I have to record is that of a lady, æt. 70, who placed herself under my medical care, owing to the benefit which an operative in the town where she resided, in the south of Devon, had derived after a month's treatment. The lady in question had been afflicted for thirty years, and frequently kept her bed for months together while suffering severely ; and during one of those periods she resolved on being removed to a railroad carriage, which brought her to Bideford on February 20th, 1858. She was a person of spare habit of body, with all the distinguishing marks of a confirmed asthmatic patient, which, doubtless, the luxuries and good things of life had materially assisted to perpetuate ; for she admitted that she ate largely every day and at every meal, whenever her sufferings would permit of

her taking food. She also admitted that she never took her food with a true relish, although the large amount of daily expectoration appeared to her to demand a continual supply of nourishment. Her tongue was coated, and stomach distended, which, as she informed me, appeared greatly to increase her sufferings, particularly after a full meal; pulse 70; heart and lungs in a tolerably normal state. She could seldom lie down in bed; but her sufferings, from her description, were never of that distressing character which I have described in former cases; still her state was such as to be continually irksome to her; the urine had constantly a pink deposit in it. After a few doses of blue pill and extract of henbane, and a saline aperient or two, I commenced the sedative and dietary system. She could not at first be convinced that she should not soon be starved by the comparatively small amount of food allowed. At the end of a fortnight all her distressing symptoms had left her, and at the end of a month she went home perfectly free from complaint, to the no small astonishment of her friends, and I continued for a few weeks to receive a satisfactory account from my patient. But a month had scarcely elapsed before I was requested to visit her, when I found that her symptoms had returned with equal severity. I also learned that she had indulged her appetite, if possible, to a greater extent than prior to my attendance upon her; she said that it had been *so ravenous* that all the powers of her mind could not induce her to control it, not even by gradually increasing the amount of nourishment prescribed for her daily consumption, and I plainly saw that my advice would be of little avail. And I understand it has been proved to be so; for she prefers, as I am told, to suffer great inconvenience to adopting even a moderate control over her fondness for eating and drinking the very best of everything this world can afford. She is one of those who say the remedy is even worse than the disease: there is only this excuse for such patients, which is, that the disease does not at any time assume the severest form.

CASE 18.—This is the case of a lady in whom the disease of dyspeptic asthma first made its appearance in the coldest regions of Russia, just ten years prior to her consulting me. The history which she gave of its origin was simply this. Having experienced some considerable anxiety and distress of mind by

which her whole system was greatly lowered and her digestion impaired, she was suddenly seized, whilst exposed to the dust and flock from a bed which was at the time being made up in her room, with a most severe fit of asthma, which lasted for several hours. These attacks returned at short intervals during her residence in Russia. She was in hopes, on her return to her native country, that her health would be restored; on the contrary, nothing appeared to relieve her, although she sought every assistance and remedy that could be procured. On September 7th, 1858, she came to this place, and was under my care for several months; and, although it cannot be said she was entirely free from asthma during that time, she passed the winter in *comparative* ease and comfort, always admitting that whenever symptoms of her complaint appeared, it was from acts of her own imprudence in eating forbidden food; but certainly the few paroxysms in this case, when they did come, were more severer than anything I ever saw in the shape of human suffering,—her agonized countenance, her cries for relief and assistance, were most distressing to hear. These attacks were, however, rare in comparison to what she had formerly experienced, and were met by means of the usual antispasmodic remedies, such as chloroform, ether, smoking stramonium, and more particularly the small French cigarettes, which appeared to have a considerable effect, being composed chiefly of stramonium leaves, which, from her own account, greatly shortened the duration of her sufferings. I may here remark that this has been the only case wherein I was under the necessity of having recourse to palliatives to lessen the severity, or shorten the period of an attack of dyspeptic asthma, which did not at first entirely yield to the strict sedative and dietary system. An opinion may, however, be formed of its success, from a letter which my patient addressed to me on the 5th of the following March, from which I make this extract:—

“ In offering to give an opinion on your treatment of my case, I think few can speak more fully than myself of the efficacy of your adopted means as being instrumental in the alleviation of this merciless malady for myself, as well as others whom I have heard of. It will be a life-long matter of thankfulness and rejoicing that we were induced to seek your advice, for after ten years' acute suffering—being for the past seven, from the month

of October to that of May or June, shut up in one room—I have during the late winter enjoyed comparative comfort and ease, and, up to the middle of January, when I had an attack of influenza, I was taking daily out-door exercise in almost every degree of temperature and all sorts of weather. I could describe my previous sufferings, but they are almost too distressing to relate; suffice it to say, then, my attacks frequently became spasmodic, and seemed for hours, even for days, at times, to threaten the annihilation of life, and these terrible paroxysms I had been accustomed to endure every fortnight ere I consulted you, till I became a mere skeleton, unequal to any fatigue, and without the power of walking. I cannot boast now of being robust, yet I am free from any acute suffering, my energy and comparative strength have returned, and, as I before said, my live-long gratitude will ever be due to you.”

As this case came again under my care the following winter, I shall have occasion to allude to it when speaking of *atmospheric influences as the exciting cause* of this most capricious disease.

CASE 19.—A lady from the south of Ireland, suffering from asthma, requested me to meet her in London on the 22nd April, 1859. Although borne down in appearance with suffering, I could see that an extraordinary amount of energy was evinced in her very intellectual countenance, and on inquiry I was informed that during the intervals from suffering she was devoted to literary pursuits, and painting, of which latter art there were several beautiful specimens of her own efforts in the apartments which she occupied. She informed me she inherited asthma on her mother's side, and gout on that of her father, and that her paternal uncle, in particular, was at times a martyr to the latter disease. She might have also inherited from the male side much of her energy and talent, as her relation, to whom I have alluded, had been during his lifetime one of our leading statesmen. She said her first attack of asthma came on about ten years previously—the exciting cause of which she considered to be sea-sickness; her age was 39; the pulse 86; she suffered repeatedly from severe palpitations of the heart; the chest emphysematous on the right side, whilst on the left the sounds emitted on percussion were dull; she is not subject to attacks of bronchitis. After an attack of asthma, she said the expectoration was at first gluey and ropy;

but when the attack was passing, the expectoration was light and frothy, and in large quantities, which brought her relief, and she was then able to lie down and sleep. There were no indications of dropsical swellings. She said she had generally three attacks of asthma during the night, and almost all of them at regular intervals, so that she seldom got more than three hours' sleep in the twenty-four. She said, however, that on the whole she got more rest in town than at her own home, and that her sufferings were not so great when in the heart of London, which she attributed to some peculiarity in the atmosphere. The bowels were at all times very constipated, and their secretions dark. The urine frequently scanty, and when so it deposited a quantity of pink sediment; at other times, when her sufferings were not so great, this secretion was pale and in large quantities. The stomach was generally distended to more than the ordinary size, but after eating food which did not appear to digest readily, her distress from the distension which it produced was very great, and nothing appeared to procure relief but pure brandy, of which she was obliged to drink freely. She lived generously, and partook of anything that happened to be on the table. On examination of the spine I found a considerable lateral curvature in the dorsal region, with slight tenderness in that immediate neighbourhood. She attributed much of her sufferings to this defect, which, she said, had increased of late.

Before I commence any account of my treatment in this case, I will extract a passage from a letter received from my patient, which says as follows:—

“ I have suffered night and day for the last ten years. I have consulted during that time thirty-seven physicians; tried allopathy, hydropathy, homœopathy, and, in addition, the air-bath, without relief. The stomach was first disordered at sea during a voyage of twenty hours at the period of my marriage, fourteen years ago. The flatulent symptoms commenced with that voyage, and increased during the next four years, but my health did not give way till I had a severe attack of influenza; when, in one fortnight, spasmodic asthma and all my other sufferings came on, and have lasted till this day. I have, during the hot weather, from four to six attacks within the twenty-four hours; in the cold weather never without two attacks in the night. The state of

the atmosphere, I may say, governs my complaint; careful diet and pepsine are helps; but I have found no cure. All physicians agree that if there were disease anywhere in the frame, I could never have lived through such sufferings. Sedatives disagree so greatly with my stomach that they can never be given me except in very urgent cases of great pain. Dr. Todd, of Brook Street, has directed what treatment I have followed the last three years. To brace my nervous system, and avoid irritation of all kind, is his chief aim. He has urged the cold shower bath, and sometimes I have used it with advantage; but only in the winter, being too ill in hot weather to bear it."

From this very explicit description of her case it was clear that the exciting cause might be distinctly traced to the effects of violent sea-sickness, which completely upset, by its enervating influence, the digestive powers of the stomach, which for ten years had never been regained; bringing to light the predisposition to asthma which this lady so distinctly inherited. I considered this a favorable case to try the effects of my treatment, inasmuch as her recovery might be possible if I could restore, by means of a strict dietary system, combined with sedative treatment, that loss of power which for ten long years had been the sole cause of the sufferings she has described.

I commenced my treatment on 5th of May, giving at first mild alterative doses of blue pill at night, combining a fourth of a grain of the extract of stramonium, with three grains of the watery extract of aloes, as an aperient pill. I then directed three grains of the extract of conium, with a fourth of a grain of the extract *Canabis Indicus*, to be given four times a day; the doses to be gradually increased to five grains of the former, and one grain of the latter, four times a day. In addition, I advised the strict dietary system to be followed, which I have recommended in former cases, allowing a liberal quantity of scalded cream, to be taken with the daily supply of bread. After commencing this plan, I received from time to time a satisfactory account from my patient, and in the month of November she writes from her home as follows:—"I believe I have great reason to thank you. My sufferings this summer have certainly lessened one half, and I can attribute it to nothing under God but your good advice. My attacks are nothing in comparison to what they were for many

years, either in violence or duration. I have adhered strictly to your plan of diet."

After this communication I heard nothing of my patient for nearly a year, when a lady, a relation of hers, staying in the neighbourhood, called at my house, at her request, to tell me that my patient now lived a life of comparative ease and comfort, at the same time saying how completely she considered her freedom from suffering to be owing to the treatment I had recommended.

I trust the number of cases which I have now reported of dyspeptic asthma will be sufficient to induce my professional brethren to bring further evidence to bear upon the treatment of a disease, which is generally looked on as one which admits of but little advantage to be derived from medical aid, although one of the most distressing and painful to which suffering humanity is heir. It has been my pleasure already to receive from men of the highest standing in our profession, assurances of their opinion of the reasonableness of my arguments and ideas on the subject; and not a few have borne testimony of its efficacy by their successful treatment of some of the most inveterate cases of what I have ventured to call dyspeptic asthma.

I HAVE extracted the foregoing from among a great number of cases in my note-book, exhibiting the results of my treatment of *dyspeptic asthma*; and having endeavoured to prove how completely *this* form of the disease is under the control of the treatment which I have adopted, I shall now proceed to notice the disease of asthma—the *exciting cause* being the effects of atmospheric influence on those who are predisposed by hereditary taint to the disease. I would first remark that, according to my experience, peculiarities in the atmosphere, in certain localities, acting on the circulating fluid through the medium of the lungs, are a much more frequent cause of continued attacks of the disease than is generally believed; and many persons remain confirmed asthmatics because they have not been able, by repeated changes of air, to find out that condition of the atmosphere which is most congenial to them.

CASE 20.—It is now about a year and a half since that I hap-

pened to meet a medical man who had retired from practice, having followed his profession with considerable repute in the neighbourhood of London. He (after hearing my remarks on the subject of asthma) said, "A nephew of mine, who lives in the neighbourhood of Richmond, is a perfect martyr to the disease. No treatment appears to relieve him. I will send for him, and place him under your care." Shortly after this, a bright, intelligent-looking boy, about sixteen years of age, waited on me. His appearance did not indicate, in any very marked degree, that he was the sufferer who had been described to me; however, on inquiry, I learned as follows:

He had suffered from early infancy from difficulty of breathing and cough. The intervals between severe attacks were of about ten days' duration; they left such debilitating effects, that his studies and enjoyments were quite interrupted; and altogether he had a miserable life of suffering. His tongue was clean, his pulse normal, his complexion clear, the chest slightly emphysematous; at the time I first saw him he was perfectly free from asthma. I did not, under these circumstances, prescribe anything further than a few regulations as to diet, requesting to be sent for when an attack occurred. At the end of a fortnight he called again, and informed me he was perfectly free, more so than he ever remembered. Week after week and month after month came, and no attack appeared. He was now so well that he ate and drank what he pleased, exposed himself to all kinds of weather, used an amazing amount of exercise in shooting, fishing, and walking, and gained considerably in strength and flesh; in fact, he was in perfect health, and he returned home without ever taking one single dose of medicine. His father, who is a physician of some eminence, was delighted at the accounts which he received of his son, and was in hopes that by the change a cure had been effected. His freedom from asthma evidently depended on the atmosphere in which he had lived for several months; for his attacks quickly recurred with violence on his return home.

I have since made inquiry whether any traces of the disease had manifested themselves in other members of his family. The result has elicited that an uncle was the victim of asthma; a peculiar and interesting history was given me of him, which is, I think, worth relating.

He was a man of considerable fortune, and lived in one of the fashionable squares in London, and he was, moreover, a member of Parliament; but all his riches and all his comforts could not keep at bay the enemy which constantly assailed him. It so happened that on one occasion he was on his way to the House, when business called him through some of the slums of Westminster, and whilst in this smoky locality, he all at once perceived that he breathed with perfect freedom. No sooner, however, did he approach the more open space near the House, than he was violently attacked with a fit of his distressing complaint. He mentioned what had occurred to his medical attendant, who advised him to make repeated excursions in the direction where he had appeared to obtain relief. The result was invariably the same. He was now determined to put the influence of the atmosphere more completely to the test; he accordingly directed his servant to bespeak a bed for him at a pothouse in the immediate neighbourhood, taking care that clean and well-aired blankets and bedding should be provided. In this pothouse he slept—and slept all night, a circumstance which had not happened for years. For several nights in succession he resorted to the same quarters, and was thus satisfied that he had found the long-sought remedy. The result was that he purchased the pothouse, fitted up comfortably, and there lived to the end of his days, perfectly free from attacks of asthma, within the precincts of the slums and smoke of Westminster. A great-aunt of the boy was also afflicted with this disease.

CASE 21.—The son of a clergyman, who was born in a parish about fifteen miles to the west of this town (whose father was a martyr to asthma, from the effects of which he died), was in early infancy attacked with oppression and difficulty of breathing, which was considered by his medical attendant as the forerunner of speedy dissolution. It happened that the child was removed for a change of air to the house of his uncle, some ten miles off, when, to the surprise of mother and nurse, the child's breathing became perfectly natural; and so it remained until he was again removed to his native air and home. This experiment was repeatedly tried, and always with the same result; in fact, his native air appeared to induce distressed breathing and cough, more than any other during the whole early period of the child's

existence. At length the time came for school education, and the boy was sent to Eton, having passed the usual diseases of infancy with as little distress and anxiety to his parents as most children. What makes this case remarkable is, that during his stay at Eton he was considered one of the most active boys out of seven hundred ; for he was one of the fastest runners, one of the best cricketers, and pulled the best oar in the whole school, proving that infantile diseases had produced no organic changes in the respiratory organs ; neither had the continued difficulty of breathing left any traces of disease ; it is almost needless to say that he was perfectly free from his hereditary complaint as long as he remained at school.

CASE 22.—I now revert to Case 18, in which the sedative and dietary system was so successful. The lady returned to this place on the following winter, with the hope of deriving equal benefit by the same course of treatment which I had previously adopted ; but not so, as her case defied every remedy under which she was placed, being only able to procure a few days' respite from the severity of her attacks by palliative measures. The most important and effectual was an enema, containing a drachm of solution of morphine in two drachms of the tincture of galbanum in thin gruel. The mild weather setting in, in the month of April, I advised her to try the smoky atmosphere of London as a remedy. At first she remained for some weeks in the outskirts of town with some near friends, from whence she wrote to me and said, " My distressing breathing has not left me ; for I get two or three paroxysms every day." The next letter told me, " I am now in the heart of the City, in lodgings, and breathe as well as I ever did in my life ; and to convince you of what I am able to do, I yesterday went without difficulty to the top of St. Paul's, in company with some of my nephews and nieces." This case shows that the exciting causes of the disease may differ in the same individual ; for, in the first instance, my patient was relieved by means of the sedative and dietary system ; and in the second, there was little alleviation until the peculiarity in the component parts of the atmosphere where she breathed acted specifically on her disease. Here it might be asked—Was the relief obtained by the blood receiving through the medium of the lungs the peculiar element which it required ? or did the specific, whatever it might

be, act immediately on the nerves of the respiratory organs? My opinion is that in the circulating fluid the secret is to be found.

CASE 22.—In the month of May, 1863, a very interesting case in a boy, æt. 15, presented itself to me. The parents had brought the patient from Somersetshire. He was stunted in his growth, his height being only four feet eight inches, and his weight did not exceed sixty-four pounds; it was reported that he had not grown since he was eleven years of age; in early childhood he was considered robust and strong.

His complexion was pallid, hair jet black, eyes dark blue, with small muscular development. He stooped considerably, and from his frequent attacks of asthma he was obliged to recline forwards on his hands, which position had induced a considerable curve in the spine directly forwards, so that his whole appearance bore that of a human sufferer. I will now give the history of the case as narrated to me by his parents and himself as well as from my own observation. His first attack of asthma made its appearance between the ages of three or four years; up to that time he had thriven well. His mother's impression was that the cutting of his late teeth was the exciting cause of his first attack; it appeared, however, that he in some measure inherited the disease, whilst his grandfather is reported to have suffered from gout. The exciting causes at present appear to be various, either from exposure to cold, fits of indigestion after taking improper food, getting wet footed, or sleeping at his own home, consequently he has resided with his uncle about two miles off, where his attacks are less frequent. His lungs are emphysematous, particularly on the right side of the chest; pulse 76 in a minute, and of little power. Heart's action feeble, without palpitations or any indications of disease. Tongue coated, with fissures in it. Bowels irregular in their action. Suffers much from distension of the stomach after eating vegetables, pastry, veal, pork, or other (to him) indigestible food. He says his distress comes on at any time that he takes one mouthful more of food than he feels he can well digest. His attacks take place frequently and at all hours, the periods of their duration vary from one hour to five or six days, and, occasionally, for months together, and so severe that he is not able to recline in bed for many nights, and not un-

frequently he has been carried into the open air in the middle of the night, in order, as he says, to keep life in him. The urine at the close of an attack has a pink deposit when cold. A copious mucous secretion is thrown off from the lungs as the attack is passing away. This is the outline of the case. In addition, I may add that he appears to be a boy of considerable intellect, and a mind well stored with history, geography, arithmetic, French, and a good deal of general information, with considerable energy and determination of purpose ; all these qualities he possesses, notwithstanding the sufferings which he endures, which are borne with the greatest fortitude and placidity ; in fact, he has, as I have before described, the mental endowments, in a high degree, of the great majority of those who are affected with the capricious, and, I may say, in many instances, the inexplicable disease of asthma. His parents, as might well be supposed, were most anxious that every advantage should be given, in order, if possible, to subdue the disease, and suggested that he should remain under my immediate watchfulness and care. On the first night after I saw him he had a slight attack ; the next day I commenced my treatment, with four grains of blue pill, three grains of the extract of henbane, and the following morning a mild aperient draught, which revealed dark and offensive secretions from the bowels, which it was my first object to improve, before commencing the sedative and dietary system. On the fourth day, I prescribed two grains of the extract of conium, three times a day, at the hours of seven, twelve, and ten, and ordered the following amount of food to be regularly and accurately given :—At seven, a teacupful of *Japan* green tea, with a little raw cream. At half-past eight, one ounce of fresh cooked meat, without fat or skin, two ounces of stale bread, or pulled bread. At half-past one, two ounces of cooked meat, as much underdressed as could be relished, with a little mustard or cayenne pepper, two ounces of stale bread. At seven p.m., two ounces of pulled bread, and a cupful of *Japan* green tea ; to bed at nine. Toast water or a cup of tea were allowed whenever the stomach was not digesting animal food, or one hour before it is taken into the stomach. This plan was pursued without an attack till the 5th of July, when, from being exposed to the damp, and getting wet in his feet, an attack of bronchitis supervened, which was

followed by a rather severe attack of asthma. It lasted several hours in spite of antispasmodics, expectorants, the fumes of tobacco, stramonium, and nitre paper. I then caused to be tried a few inspirations from thirty drops of chloroform, which gave some relief; after an hour, finding that the sufferings, although mitigated were not completely relieved, I administered twenty drops of chloroform on sugar; instantaneous relief followed, accompanied with a copious frothy expectoration. There was no attack again until the 3rd of September, when, from exposure to damp and cold, a less violent paroxysm came on at night, which was quickly relieved by the internal use of the chloroform, after the fumes of nitre paper and stramonium had been tried without success. Soon after this time I increased the dose of the extract of conium to three grains, three times a day, and added an ounce more to the animal food for breakfast, and half an ounce at dinner, the powers of digestion being much improved; an additional allowance of pure cream was also permitted during the day. In addition to the sedative pills, I prescribed one grain of iodide of potassium, to be given in camphor mixture twice a day. A compound rhubarb pill is occasionally given to regulate the action of the bowels. The plan here laid down has been strictly followed for the last ten months, without any return of asthma whatever. The general appearance of the patient is that of a high-spirited healthy boy, capable of any amount of fatigue, exposure to cold, or damp. Everything has been done to produce vigour of constitution, daily exercise, drilling, dancing, fencing, rowing, gymnastics, &c., whilst his education has advanced in mathematics, French, Latin, German, drawing, under private tuition. The curvature in the spine has greatly improved, and within the year he has grown just two inches, and his weight has increased twelve pounds. The emphysema of the lungs has almost disappeared. My desire will be to continue the present plan, increasing the amount of animal food by degrees to eight ounces during the day for another year, when I trust the predisposition to disease will be eradicated. The long continuance of the iodide of potassium has certainly not produced debility, or acted injuriously on the constitution; on the contrary, it would appear to have eliminated with the hereditary poison, in the circulation, as it were, and in this way acted specifically; but this

result is not the case in all cases of this capricious and mysterious malady.

CASE 24.—In the beginning of last year I was summoned to attend a boy, æt. 16 years, and found him in extreme suffering from an attack of asthma, sitting up in bed and reclining forward on the palms of his hands, whilst his elbows rested on his knees, apparently panting for life; eyes protruding; skin livid; and his countenance indicating the greatest distress. On inquiry, I found he had recently come from London, where he had been a martyr to the disease from early infancy, and from which I could learn he inherited the disease. My first efforts were to endeavour to relieve the immediate and distressing symptoms by means of antispasmodics, expectorants, mustard poultices, &c., &c. These remedies having failed, I had recourse to the external application of chloroform to the chest, which procured instant relief. The boy's health was greatly impaired, and the digestive organs were sadly at fault; the secretions from the bowels dark and offensive; urine loaded with lithates. This state of things having been improved by means of a little blue pill and henbane, with saline aperients, I commenced the sedative and dietary system, to be as strictly followed as circumstances would permit. The case went on well for some weeks, when the unexpected news arrived of the sudden death of the patient's father, who was expected home from sea; the sad intelligence produced a most depressing effect. The digestive organs became out of order, and a return of the enemy laid him prostrate again; however, time and the watchful care of a mother softened his grief, and the prescribed plan of treatment was again renewed, giving in addition one grain of the iodide of potassium twice a day; this was followed up for months, and he has never had any return of his complaint; and I often meet the boy in apparent good health and spirits, with eyes beaming with gratitude for a release from the sufferings which had afflicted him longer than memory could carry him back.

In submitting to the profession a second edition of my pamphlet on asthma, I have only thought it necessary to increase the number of cases by adding two to those already published in my first edition. These cases are so far interesting as they evince the efficacy of the iodide of potassium as a valuable remedy in

certain cases of asthma, wherein it would appear to eliminate with the poison in the circulation which produces the disease, and thereby neutralize the predisposition which genders the disease. On the other hand, I have often had occasion to withhold the use of the iodide of potassium, from its tendency in other cases to aggravate the symptoms of this mysterious disease. I may mention here that I have given in some cases of dyspeptic asthma two or three grains of the trisnitrate of bismuth, three times a day. This remedy appeared to benefit those cases where neuralgia in the region of the stomach existed whilst the process of digestion was going on.

I now proceed to record the apparent effect of atmosphere on a community. I was requested, about two years since, to visit a patient in the south of Devon, on the banks of the Tamar, suffering from asthma. Three or four persons from that neighbourhood having previously come to Bideford to be under my care had derived considerable benefit from my treatment. These cases had occasioned some amount of talk, and during my few hours' stay in the town, no fewer than thirty afflicted mortals presented themselves before me. On a second visit, four or five weeks afterwards, about twenty fresh cases came before me. It would be needless in me to record the varied peculiarities in all these cases; but there are a few which were remarkable, namely, that nine out of ten gave a clear history of their hereditary taint of the disease. A few inherited both gout and asthma; and one in particular, a female, told me she was liable to attacks of both diseases, and that during an attack of gout she was always perfectly free from asthma. I think this fact is additional evidence in favour of the opinion I have ventured to advance, that asthma is a blood disease.

I am told that the number afflicted with asthma in the locality of which I am now speaking is quite surprising, when compared with other places. In this neighbourhood, the cases amongst the natives are few and far between. The usual state of the atmosphere in that part of South Devon to which I have alluded, is considered humid and very mild, as proved by the fact that oranges grow and come to maturity in the open air, as I myself witnessed on the occasion of my visits. What the precise nature of the

peculiarities of the atmosphere is I will not pretend to say. I am informed, on good authority, that in some districts in Portugal the disease is never known, particularly at Oporto, whither many an afflicted person from this country, as well as from others, flies for relief. That the disease is seen in most parts of the world is certain; and I think I may say that I have had patients from all its quarters. One of the most distressing cases I ever saw was in an aged female of the Ojibbeway tribe. She, with her family, was passing through the country in a caravan, to be shown as wonders to the people of England as one of the tribes of our race. I learnt that she had been afflicted for a great number of years, and the only relief she obtained was in smoking large quantities of tobacco every day. By whom this remedy was recommended I could not ascertain; perhaps, under existing circumstances, it was the best. She had all the symptoms of a dyspeptic stomach; and had the opportunity offered, it would have added no small amount of interest in the history of my dyspeptic asthmatics to have treated her on the sedative and dietary system.

I now proceed to speak in general terms of the treatment of asthmatic patients, whose attacks are brought on from other causes than those I have already named—such as bronchitis, influenza, or any epidemic which may pass over a district. In such cases it is utterly useless to treat the disease of asthma specifically; but, on the contrary, we must administer those remedies which are peculiarly adapted to meet the circumstances of the case. For instance, should an attack arise in consequence of sudden exposure to cold or damp, producing pains in the chest, severe cough, with difficult breathing, a quick pulse, and should these symptoms be preceded by a shivering fit, in such a case I should recommend leeching, counter-irritation, salines with antimonials, barley-water, etc. Should influenza prevail, and the patient in addition to asthmatic symptoms, complain of constriction and pains across the brow, with tenderness of the eyeballs, oppression at the chest, with great lassitude of the limbs and depression of spirits; in that case, I endeavour, first, to get rid of the epidemic through the medium of the skin, inducing, if possible, profuse perspirations, without the assistance of antimony or any debilitating remedy, having recourse

to mustard fomentations for the feet : and for the purpose of acting on the skin, I have almost invariably found a most simple remedy the best, such as the following :—

R Magnesiæ Sulphatis, gr. xij;
Potassæ Nitratis, gr. vj;
Pulveris Ipecacuanhæ, gr. j;
Pulveris Rhei, gr. ij.

M. Fiat pulvis, 6tis horis sumendus.

The patient being kept in a temperature of sixty degrees, Fahr., and entirely free from the influence of the external atmosphere.

There is, however, a variety of exciting causes which bring to light this mysterious disease—such as peculiar odours, the excitement which joy produces, or the depressing influences of grief; and, on the other hand, these emotions will at times arrest an attack in its severest form. I once saw a lady who first experienced an attack of asthma from hearing of the sudden death of her mother; and again, I know a gentleman in London who, whilst he is engaged in a game of billiards or a rubber, is quite free from asthma; but as soon as the excitement is over, the oppression of breathing returns. I have been told this old gentleman will keep his carriage waiting for hours at the door of his club-house simply because he dreads to return to his home at night, from the sure conviction that he is to pass a night of suffering and distress. Again, a lady of my acquaintance will detect the smallest quantity of powdered ipecacuanha which may be exposed in the room where she sits from the distressing asthmatic effect it produces on the respiratory organs. Another takes a sea voyage during the hay season to avoid what is commonly called hay asthma, and another similarly afflicted finds instant relief from a pinch of powdered camphor taken as snuff. Again, we have asthma from the effects of pressure on a nerve, or from mischief going on in the spinal cord; and I have also seen a fit of hysteria bring on an attack of asthma. But the most helpless and least remediable forms of the disease are those in which diseases of the heart or lungs coexist with asthma. Affections of the heart are not uncommon in worn-out constitutions, from the effects of repeated attacks of asthma; the patient being brought to the lowest possible condition by a life which has been passed in

suffering and misery. There are, however, comparatively few cases in which the lungs undergo such a change in their structure as to produce a fatal result, as the respiratory organs appear to adapt themselves to the peculiar functions which they have to perform in asthmatic persons without producing a fatal change of structure.

I will now mention the most effectual palliative remedies which I have employed with more or less success ; but no one of them is to be relied on in any second attack, for what may succeed to-day may fail to-morrow, as I have often witnessed.

The first on the list is stramonium, the fumes of which may be collected in an inverted glass bowl with a narrow mouth ; the bowl, being charged to its full, is placed under the mouth of the patient, who is directed to inhale the smoke which has been collected in the bowl, taking care to hold his head away from the bowl when an expiration takes place. Chloroform, both taken internally or inhaled, is a powerful remedy, but it must be employed with caution, and never administered except by a medical attendant. The extract of Indian Hemp, in doses of from two to four grains (or thirty minims of the tincture) will often relieve spasmodic asthma ; and so will also Browne's Chlorodyne, in doses of from fifteen to twenty minims. The fumes from nitre paper in a state of ignition, well inhaled, is often a valuable remedy. Care should be taken to procure the best prepared from a good chemist. Chloric ether and the tincture of the lobelia inflata will occasionally relieve. Bicarbonate of soda, as well as chlorate of potass, given in full doses, I have frequently seen produce a good effect. Again, I have seen repeated doses of sulphate of alum procure relief, the powder being allowed to dissolve on the tongue before it is swallowed, in ten-grain doses. I have also seen the fumes of tobacco, inhaled as I have recommended in the use of stramonium, relieve, when other remedies have failed ; but I do not like this remedy, it produces such deadly faintness and nausea. Small drinks of the best Mocha coffee, made strong, will often procure relief. On two occasions, when every other remedy failed, I succeeded in procuring almost instant relief, by injecting in an enema two grains of morphine and a drachm of tincture of assafœtida. These were cases where mental distress appeared to be the exciting cause.

I have often sat at the bedside of one suffering from the severest form of the disease, watching with great anxiety the result of prescribed remedies, and it has not unfrequently happened that many had been tried without relief, the patient all this time gasping for life with sufferings the most intense, when relief has at length come from a remedy apparently the most unlikely to procure it—so capricious is the disease, and so uncertain the remedy in asthmatic cases of this particular character.

Having now recorded my treatment and opinion as regards a considerable number of cases of asthma which have come under my notice during the space of some years, I would, in conclusion, make a few additional remarks, which may, perhaps, lead those disposed to follow up the subject with scientific research to throw still more light on the actual *cause* of this disease.

So long as asthma is ranked amongst diseases which are called peculiarly nervous, so long can we never hope to come to any correct conclusion ; the idea being so vague, and the laws which govern the nervous system for the most part so incomprehensible. Is it not more likely that the real cause of the disease is, as in other hereditary diseases, some impurity or deficient element in the circulating fluid ? For instance, do we not find in scrofula, remedies in iodine, and in phosphates of lime and iron ? In phthisis, do we not see that cod-liver oil will arrest the disease, and in some instances eradicate the predisposition to it ? And do we not find in some forms of gout that colchicum and alkalies will keep at bay this disease ? In other instances all traces of gout will be lost by simply drinking at meal-times what is commonly called rough cider. How are these results brought about, but through the medium of the circulating fluid, which takes up the antidote after the process of digestion is completed, and receives from the remedies employed, that which is required to nourish the human frame, and carry on life free from those diseases which hereditary predisposition has implanted ? True it is that the exciting causes of asthma are various and that the disease, although in the constitution, may not be brought to light until the individual so predisposed comes in contact with such causes. Now, in nearly every case which I have recorded, I have been able distinctly to trace hereditary predisposition ; and what, may I ask, does hereditary predisposition mean but a taint in the blood, or, in other words, a constitutional defect ?

I think it must be admitted from the history and symptoms which I have given of dyspeptic asthma in particular, that this form of the disease, at least, is under the control of medical treatment. Nothing can be more conclusive of the fact than the evidence given by those who have been martyrs to the disease, and have had sufficient resolution to carry out the prescribed treatment in its full integrity. This being admitted, what does it prove? Surely that the beneficial change is derived from the purity imparted to the blood, by means of a more perfect performance of the office of digestion of the wholesome food which is taken into the stomach for the purpose of nourishing the body, and here lies the secret of the treatment in an especial manner of all constitutional diseases. If this principle be admitted, then we have advanced far on the road in combating this distressing and formidable disease.

I have before stated that the next frequent exciting cause which brings the disease into action is atmospheric; these results are most mysterious, as in some instances, an atmosphere apparently the most highly charged with impurities will act as a specific in the disease, whilst apparently the most pure air will, on the other hand, bring on the most distressing state of sufferings to the person predisposed to the disease of asthma; and how, I would ask, can these contradictory phenomena be accounted for, except by the supposition that some peculiar element in the atmosphere either adds to or takes from the healthy condition of the spring of life? In the atmosphere both the bane and the antidote are to be met with. And why should not the remedy be in our own hands, in these days of advance in science, both as regards microscopic discoveries and chemical research. I have recently attended a case of many years' standing, in which it would appear that every known remedy has been tried, in the hands of the most experienced medical men in this and in various countries, which have been unavailing, and the only place where life is enjoyed free from suffering is Florence, where for nine months, my patient resided, experiments were repeatedly tried by his going for a time a short distance from Florence, but as soon as the attempt was made, so sure did the enemy make his appearance. Circumstances will not admit of sufferer remaining where life is a blessing, consequently he now suffers more or less every day.

There are other exciting causes of the disease which, as yet, appear to baffle all conjecture as to how they act so instantaneously ; I mean impressions on the mind, such as grief, fear, sudden passion, news of an exciting nature, and hysteria. When these cases do occur, I have almost invariably discovered, on strict inquiry, that hereditary predisposition to the disease prevails. There is, however, one remarkable feature in every form of asthma which is well worthy of notice, and it is this, that on the termination of every attack an expectoration is thrown off from the lungs varying in quantity and appearance. In some instances there is a thick heavy mucus ; in others a large quantity of mucus of a light frothy appearance ; whilst in the severest form of the disease there may be only a few small dark pellets coughed up before relief is obtained.

I will not venture further in my remarks, which are the result of my own personal experience. I can only hope they may lead those who are more particularly occupied in scientific research to bear in mind the few observations which I have ventured to bring forward. To my professional brethren I would say, that perhaps there is no disease the successful treatment of which brings greater gratification, not only from the grateful acknowledgments of the patients themselves, but also from being brought into contact with the peculiar class of persons who are generally the subjects of asthma.

The following favorable notice of this publication has appeared in the 'LONDON MEDICAL REVIEW,' for the present month (June):

"Dr. Salter allows that there is one class of asthmatic cases in which the exciting cause of the paroxysms appears to be essentially humoral. Mr. Pridham is of opinion that these cases are exceedingly numerous, and that dyspepsia is the most common cause of the disease. Mr. Pridham is a surgeon in extensive practice at Bideford, in Devonshire, who, having for a length of time, enjoyed a great reputation in that country, and even beyond it, for his skill in the treatment of asthma, has now given to the profession full particulars of his methods of management, with numerous illustrative cases. These cases are described, wherever it is possible, in the very words of the patients."

"Mr. Pridham prefers green to black tea, perhaps as being more strongly antisporific. With this may be compared Dr. Salter's penchant for strong coffee. He allows no fluid during dinner or supper, nor for three hours after each meal, and by his other dietetic regulations, endeavours to secure the perfect digestion of the meals, and to obviate the production of flatus. The success of this treatment is amply attested by the facts detailed in Mr. Pridham's papers. These are evidently the production of a practical, observant, and experienced man, who writes because he feels that he has something to say which ought to be said,—something new, true, and important.

"Mr. Pridham, of Bideford, North Devon, has been very successful in the management of asthmatic cases by extremely strict dietetic treatment and sedatives during the intervals of the paroxysms." The 'Science and Practice of Medicine,' William Aitkin, M.D., 1863.

A 'TREATISE ON THE DISEASE OF ASTHMA.' BY
T. L. PRIDHAM, SURGEON, &C., BIDEFORD, NORTH DEVON.

By the same Author.

AN 'ESSAY ON THE EFFECTS OF IMPERFECT DRAINAGE AND
IMPURE WATER ON EPIDEMIC DISEASES.'

AND 'ON THE SUCCESSFUL TREATMENT OF CHOLERA BY NITROUS
ACID.'

AND 'ON THE EPIDEMIC DISEASES WHICH PREVAILED IN
BIDEFORD IN 1857-8.'

AND 'ON TRAUMATIC TETANUS.'

AND 'ON PUERPERAL CONVULSIONS.'

AND 'GUN-SHOT WOUNDS.'

